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## REVIEWS.

## ZOLA.

*Paris.* By Emile Zola. Translated by Ernest Alfred Vizetelly. (London: Chatto & Windus.)

ZOLA'S trial and sentence on the eve of the publication of *Paris* is one of those happy accidents, a kind of answering signal or flare, by which Life unexpectedly reveals the true import of a man's life-work, and the exact significance of his figure to his age. When a great writer suddenly leaves his lofty and privileged post of vantage, the guarded window where is conceded to him the right of theorising on the life spreading beneath him, and when he mixes with the crowd in the streets, we sometimes have this happy unlooked-for flare from Life itself answering the man—as we see in Hugo's life, the *Coup d'Etat*, his exile, and *Les Châtiments* answered by Sedan; and in Tolstoi's life the long search for a moral basis in Nature, that his novels exhibit, is answered by his personal struggles among the exploited and famine-stricken peasants with the crowning Petersburg society verdict—Tolstoi is mad. And now in Zola's case we still have with us the shout of the crowd, "Conspuez Zola," and the buzz of the multitudinous little men—"Monstrous Vanity, Traitor to France, Suicide as a writer," and we await the turn of the wheel.

Meanwhile, *Paris* appears before us as a last proclamation of the Zola doctrine, a testimony to the man's laborious honesty and the main purpose of his life-work. Also it comes as a remarkable document to the critic, as summarising the "naturalistic" method, and showing more clearly than ever the power and limitations of that "death-in-life" method in art.

In the central idea of *Paris* is all the genius of the book. As the essence of Zola's talent is his power of drawing strong abstract conclusions from the concrete examples of his forty note-books, so in *Paris* we find all the panorama of the city's life is viewed in relation to the immense struggle looming in France between Capitalism and the Socialistic idea. In Zola's view the Anarchist peril is the logical outcome of the

corruption of the national life by the excessive power placed in the hands of Capital by the *régime* of the middle class. Parliament is at the mercy of financiers and professional politicians, who use it for private ends, and thereby corrupt and weaken the people from top to bottom. The Panama scandals and the appearance of Ravachol are as cause and effect; but while the people are growing more and more sick of the vicious circle France is turning in, Society can give birth to no new ideal for the nation to work by. In science, education, love of justice, and hatred of sham lies the only hope of Society towards the fitting reorganisation of its life.

In this development of the central idea of *Paris*, Zola, however, has sacrificed every instinct of the true artist. The novel is a powerful and clever commentary on life—a piece of special pleading of great interest—but it is not *life*, and it is false to every principle of art. It is a novel with a purpose, and it carries out its purpose in most remorseless fashion. It is not life, because though Zola has searched for, and found, typical living figures, he has made those figures the puppets of his pre-ordained drama. Thus Guillaume Froment, the hero of the book, the great scientist with Anarchistic leanings, acts in a manner throughout false to the life of the actual scientist (well known to a certain international circle) who has served Zola for a model. Indeed, Guillaume's final appearance as the avenger or regenerator of Society by means of his discovery of a new terrible explosive which can blow up half a city, or work a motor engine, is a piece of sheer romanticism, which, coming in the guise of a minute study of social phenomena, is inartistic to the verge of comedy. So also Pierre Froment, the abbé, who is the horrified spectator of the public and private antics of deputies, Bourse jobbers, Anarchists, prime ministers, journalists and decadents, is merely an animated lay figure, very conveniently fortified with tours to Lourdes and Rome, on his mission to discover whether Christianity is, or is not, played out as a regenerative force in the life of civilisation.

All Zola's characters, in fact, in *Paris* are so carefully fitted into their limited spaces, thought-out actions, and manipulated rôles that the very term *art* can be applied to the novel only in a limited and secondary sense. Art is subordinated in *Paris* to the position of a humble servant, who runs to open the door and usher the characters, big and small, into the presence of the General Purpose, the big wirepuller, who in turn frowns at Art and keeps her severely in her place. In fact, just as *Le Débat* and *Dr. Pascal* were mechanical novels, *Paris* is a mechanical novel, relieved, as was *L'Argent*, by the presence of a certain animus against corruption, which animus gives to the book its vitality and force. The Anarchists in *Paris* are figures true only to the typical conditions of their life, they are not true in themselves, and it is the same with the rest of the deputies and fashionable people described; all wear masks very carefully modelled and true to the detailed

observation of the clever author who has seen his people go to and fro in the crowd of daily Parisian life; but all is *external*, the masks cannot change, there is little or no inner life, and so the reader is in reality never deeply stirred by what is shown him by Zola. He is interested, now a little moved or a little shocked, just as he would be if, while looking at a gathering of living people, a clever man of the world approached and whispered in his ear confidential secrets and remarkable facts about everybody's private life. But to go further, to admit us into the thought, the emotions of the people themselves is impossible for Zola. He stops short of being a great artist; he has always his General Plan to substitute for the mysterious living thing which eludes all generalisation and abstraction and theory, which glides away and vanishes under the fingers of the writers who are not content to give up their plan of observation, and simply follow life in its minutest manifestation and ceaseless evolution. Zola is not a great artist: he is a great writer, a very different thing. And his greatness consists in his intensely concentrated point of view, and his courage to execute what he sees.

His courage to execute what he sees! That is the very quality which has brought him at different times into sharp collision with the *bourgeoisie* of England and France. Admitting that Zola has "an original taint," as a great writer has expressed it, his power on his age has lain in his unflinching determination to exhibit and analyse all in modern life which Society endeavours to veil. Just as his coarse, crude, generalised pictures of life originally laid bare the rottenness of the Third Empire, so his action in the Dreyfus case has lately revealed the amazing power which the official pontiffs and military mandarins wield over an excited and hysterical France. But his courage to see and speak against the conventions and prejudices of French society touching justice, while deservedly applauded in England at the present day, was precisely what led English society only a few years back to imprison his luckless English publisher! The English view, that to exhibit the corruption of sexual morality is corruption itself, is pretty nearly balanced by the French view—that to exhibit the weakness of military justice is to be false to all traditions of patriotism. At bottom the two views are very similar: the English hate to have sexual morality examined at all; the French detest a man who casts a slur on their military glory. In both cases Society accuses the author of "corrupting" it, while he seeks only to show forth the corruption he has seen. And suddenly a significant flare from Life itself reveals the attitude of the man towards Society, and of Society towards the man.

We well remember an amusing little scene, between Zola and the English crowd, which we witnessed at the Guildhall some years ago. Zola was being lionised and fêted by a crowd of three thousand English citizens who cordially detested the great writer's books. The good *bourgeoisie*, the upholders of all the public and private moralities, were flocking round the French-

man in pressing, curious crowds, whispering loudly: "That's he! That's the man," all anxious to catch sight of such an immoral writer. Zola turned his back deliberately on those excellent citizens, and gazed steadily with an interested air at the ceiling! He knew them, and he knew what they thought of him! At the present moment we have the rival *bourgeoisie* pelting the same man's doors with filth, and imprisoning him and his publisher together. Meanwhile, our English press and public solemnly applaud the great writer. But in both cases the imprisonment was meted out for the same offence—it was for the telling of inconvenient truths.

### MR. GISSING ON DICKENS.

*Charles Dickens.* By George Gissing. "Victorian Era Series." (Blackie.)

THE intelligent reader will not be surprised to find Mr. Gissing making his bow, for the first time, as a critic and a critic of fiction. The author of *New Grub Street* has always shown himself preoccupied with art as well as life. His own creative method has been a conscious one, deliberately pursued, and from time to time he has let us see that the problems which the choice of a method inevitably raises are not without their considerable interest for him. Criticism has peeped out through the novels. The present book, however, is criticism pure and simple. Subject to the general plan of the "Victorian Era Series," which was intended to include in its record of the age "the life-work of its typical and influential men," it was probably open to Mr. Gissing to deal with his subject much as he pleased: and he has chosen to treat it mainly after the fashion of a "critical study," subordinating biography, except in so far as biography was necessary to formulate the conditions under which Dickens worked. We may as well say at once that Mr. Gissing's first essay in criticism seems to us quite unusually successful. He has, of course, something to learn. It would, perhaps, have been wiser, for instance, to have planned the book as a study in development, and to have avoided such an arbitrary arrangement of material and topics as the division under aspects, which he actually adopts, makes necessary. "Characterisation," "Satiric Portraiture," "Women and Children": these are the titles of three successive chapters, and it is a fine object-lesson in tautology and cross-division that they imply. And Mr. Gissing has, unfortunately, to struggle against a somewhat jerky and rough-hewn style, full of imperfectly related clauses and uglinesses of speech, which, if it does something to mar his novels, is to our mind even more offensive in a critical work. It is the lack of these two qualities, the architectural sense and the sense of the beautiful and the appropriate in language, that alone prevent Mr. Gissing's book from belonging to the first rank of critical literature. Nevertheless, Mr. Gissing's is thoroughly good criticism; primarily because it is the criticism of an expert, and an expert who

has approached his subject at once with complete sympathy and with a clear perception of the very vital differences of method between his own work and that which he is examining. Mr. Gissing is by no means of Dickens's school; yet one feels that he writes of Dickens out of profound admiration and exhaustive knowledge; he has soaked himself in Dickens, and what he has to say is said at first-hand, without much reference to conventional criticisms.

It is, of course, precisely the difference in methods and ideals between critic and criticised that gives the performance its chief interest. Dickens and Mr. Gissing have just enough in common to make their essential divergence the more remarkable. The younger writer, like the older, finds his material mainly in the crowded life of the modern city, and mainly in those strata of city life which are formed by the so-called lower and middle classes. Yet between them there is a great gulf fixed. Since Dickens, the novelist has discovered that his work, too, is an art; he has become self-conscious; has set an austere ideal before him. In Dickens, as in the average novel-writer of his day, this development had hardly taken place. If he was self-conscious of anything, it was of a mission, rather than an art. In Mr. Gissing, on the other hand, through temperament and through training, the modern spirit finds very characteristic expression. His natural attitude to his material is that of a realism which to Dickens would have seemed uncalled for and undesirable. Mr. Gissing, however, is not so pre-occupied with his own methods as to be unable to enter with the requisite detachment into those of his predecessor; his discussion of Dickens's veracity is a fine as well as a searching piece of analysis.

The common objection of readers brought up in the modern school to Dickens is certainly his "unreality"; and this in face of the fact that he clearly regarded himself as a painter of real life:

"Had the word been in use he must necessarily have called himself a Realist. It is one of the biographical commonplaces concerning Dickens. Everyone knows how he excited himself over his writing, how he laughed and cried over his imaginary people, how he had all but made himself ill with grief over the death of little Nell or of Paul Dombey."

Even his grotesques—Quilp, Mantalini, Sam Weller—are intended for transcripts from real life, transcripts of its eccentrics. They are not acknowledged figments of the poetic imagination, like Don Quixote or the White Knight. Dickens's world is not confessedly a dream-world, or a world of romance. And yet with realism, as we now regard realism, the whole thing has patently nothing to do. In explaining this, Mr. Gissing would distinguish. The true "unreality" of a Dickens is an unreality of incident and plot. He is an incorrigible sentimentalist, who will never refuse to gladden his readers with a happy ending:

"Ah, those final chapters of Dickens! How eagerly they are read by the young, and with what a pleasant smile by elders who prize the good things of literature! No one is forgotten,

and many an unsuspected bit of happiness calls aloud for gratitude to the author. Do you remember Mr. Mell, the underpaid and bullied usher in *David Copperfield*—the poor, broken-spirited fellow whose boots will not bear another mending—who uses an hour of liberty to visit his mother in the almshouse, and gladden her heart by piping sorry music on his flute? We lose sight of him, utterly; knowing only that he has been sent about his business after provoking the displeasure of the insolent lad Steerforth. Then, do you remember how, at the end of the book, David has news from Australia, delicious news about Mr. Micawber, and Mr. Gumbridge, and sundry other people, and how in reading the colonial paper he suddenly comes upon the name of *Dr. Mell*, a distinguished man at the Antipodes? Who so stubborn a theorist that the kindly figment of the imagination does not please him? Who would prefer to learn the cold fact that Mell, the rejected usher, sank from stage to stage of wretchedness and died—uncertain which—in the street or the workhouse?"

Mr. Gissing, one gathers, would find the roots of this tendency in Dickens in the fact that Dickens's public liked happy endings, and that Dickens never conceived it to be his business to do other than gratify them. "In this respect a pure democrat, he believed, probably without ever reflecting upon it, that the approval of the people was necessarily the supreme in art." Nor was he in this doing violence to his own feelings. He shared to the full the preferences and the prejudices of his public. By temperament he was himself a genial optimist. "Nature made him the mouthpiece of his kind, in all that relates to simple emotions and homely thought." Mr. Gissing might have added here, that he had the theatrical instinct, as it is understood at the Adelphi, strongly developed. It is surely the same order of ideas to which belongs the melodramatic tragedy of Bill Sikes or Jonas Chuzzlewit that infallibly turns the conclusion of every novel into the semblance of a Christmas-card.

Artificial and sentimental as Dickens's plots may be, Mr. Gissing does not incline to find the same qualities in his characterisation. Exceptions must be made: some of Dickens's characters remain shadowy; others, in particular the villains and other persons of strong passions, fail to convince; but for the great bulk Mr. Gissing would claim veracity in the highest sense. They are idealised, of course; in the lower sense, by the omission of features the contemplation of which would have been painful alike to the novelist and to his readers. To match Dickens's idealism at its best, Mr. Gissing would go to the creator of Falstaff and Dame Quickly and Juliet's Nurse. Take Mrs. Gamp, idealised, in every sense, otherwise she had been intolerable, but with the essential wonderfully retained.

"Vulgarity he leaves, that is of the essence of the matter; vulgarity unsurpassable is the note of Mrs. Gamp. Vileness, on the other hand, becomes grotesquerie, wonderfully converted into a subject of laughter. Her speech, the basest ever heard from human tongue, by a process of infinite subtlety, which leaves it the same, yet not the same, is made an endless amusement, a source of quotation for laughing lips incapable of unclean utterance. . . . Do you ask for the Platonic idea of London's monthly nurse early in Queen Victoria's reign?



Dickens shows it you embodied. At such a thing as this, crawling between earth and heaven, what can one do but laugh? Its existence is a puzzle, a wonder. The class it represents shall be got rid of as speedily as possible; well and good, we cannot tolerate such a public nuisance. But the individual—so perfect a specimen—shall be preserved for all time by the magic of a great writer's deep-seeing humour, and shall be known as Mrs. Gamp."

Humour, no doubt, is the solvent, making possible and credible a far greater amount of idealism of whatever type than plain, straightforward portraiture will endure.

Mr. Gissing's chapters are full of matter, and we must needs leave most of it untouched. He defends the pathos of Dickens, even as it shapes itself in the death-beds of Paul Dombey and of Little Nell. Not "cheap" or "mawkish," he declares, because not "flagrantly untrue." Well, we would gladly break a lance with him here, but not at the fag-end of an article. Besides, room must assuredly be found for the very curious passage in which, commenting upon Dickens's portraiture of middle-class women, Mr. Gissing suddenly breaks out into vehement declamation against the whole type discussed:

"These remarkable creatures belong for the most part to one rank of life, that which we vaguely designate as the lower middle class. In general their circumstances are comfortable; they suffer no hardship—save that of birth, which they do not perceive as such; nothing is asked of them but a quiet and amiable discharge of household duties—they are treated by their male kindred with great, often with extraordinary, consideration. Yet their characteristic is acidity of temper and boundless licence of querulous or insulting talk. The real business of their lives is to make all about them as uncomfortable as they can. Invariably they are unintelligent and untaught; very often they are flagrantly imbecile. Their very virtues (if such persons can be said to have any) become a scourge. In the high-ways and byways of life, by the fireside, and in the bed-chamber, their voices shrill upon the terrified ear. It is difficult to believe that death can stifle them; one imagines them upon the threshold of some other world, sounding confusion among unhappy spirits who hoped to have found peace."

No doubt this is the middle-class woman as Mr. Gissing sees her; but has it much to do with Dickens? And if occasionally, shadowing it forth in humour, he draws such a picture, he certainly would not have subscribed to the further statement that "such women are a multitude no man can number; every other house in the cheap suburbs will be found to contain at least one specimen—very often two, for the advantage of quarrelling when men are not at hand." Can it be that this passage was really intended for one of Mr. Gissing's own novels, and that it has unwittingly got mixed up with his Dickens slips? In any case, it is out of the plane of a book remarkable, as a whole, for its sympathetic and tolerant attitude.

### NOT TO BE READ AT ALL.

*To be Read at Dusk, and Other Stories, Studies, and Sketches.* By Charles Dickens. (Redway.)

THE reputation of Dickens may brave criticism and endure the stream of time, but it will not be exalted by such *débris* as Mr. F. G. Kitton has unearthed from the pages of *Household Words* and elsewhere and collected under the title of *To be Read at Dusk*. The expiration of copyright seems to have rendered it possible for him to publish things which Dickens's responsible literary executors wisely left in oblivion. We are not grateful for so shameless a piece of book-making. These articles were mere journalism at best, by no means intended for a permanent existence. And the majority of them are quite unworthy of being paraded under the name of a great writer. The humour is worn very thin, so thin that you readily recognise the threads from which some middle-class humorists of our own day derive. The more serious pieces take Dickens quite out of his sphere. They are merely of the nature of leading articles on topics of the day. And to disinter the criticism of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood with its would-be funny description of Millais' "Carpenter's Shop," and its total want of artistic discernment or understanding, was a cruel thing.

### FACILE EMOTIONS.

*Songs of Love and Empire.* By E. Nesbit. (Constable & Co.)

MISS NESBIT is not so easily summed up as are some of her sisters in poesy. She says so many conflicting things, offers so many changes of mood, that we are confused. And in *A Pomander of Verse*, her previous book, there were characteristics and excellences, not more than hinted at in the volume before us. There was a spring song, beginning, "The silver birch is a dainty lady," perfect in its simple way, and there were touches of ironical humour. Here it is mostly patriotism and plaintiveness, and we miss both the simplicity of the spring song and the ironical humour. More, we begin to doubt the author's sincerity. We begin to say, Has Miss Nesbit her own thoughts at all, or only sentimental ideals and memories? We know that she is quick to note Nature's changes, and sensitive to sun and gloom; but has she a point of view? has she a personality? Another book like the one before us we should say No; yet the memory of *A Pomander of Verse* convinces us that she has.

The new volume opens patriotically. When the Diamond Jubilee called for celebration, Miss Nesbit was at hand to celebrate it: and here is the result. Her loyalty is unimpeachable, and she has set it prettily enough to music. The rest of the book is given to Love, and all the joys and pains that surge in Love's wake. Miss Nesbit shows herself the comrade both of

those that love and are gay and of those that love and are sorrowful. We do not say that she consoles; yet she indicates that she also has dwelt in the land of shadows, and as in mere companionship in adversity there is some consolation, it is possible for the disappointed to enjoy the grey delights of mutual grief as they read. But let them beware: Miss Nesbit's poems are dedicated to her husband!

Here are three stanzas of despair:

"Wide downs all gray, with gray of clouds  
roofed over,  
Chill fields stripped naked of their gown  
of grain,  
Small fields of rain-wet grass and close-grown  
clover,  
Wet, wind-blown trees—and, over all, the  
rain.

Does memory lie? For Hope her missal  
closes

So far away the may and roses seem;  
Ah! was there ever a garden red with roses?  
Ah! were you ever mine save in a dream?

So long it is since Spring, the skylark waking  
Heard her own praises in his perfect strain;  
Low hang the clouds, the sad year's heart is  
breaking,  
And mine, my heart—and, over all, the  
rain."

A few lyrics as hopeless and as deftly turned as that, and the blighted reader dissolves away! Miss Nesbit is probably too much in the thrall of sentiment, too little disposed to fight against difficulties. To sing in the minor key is easier than to sing in the major, and therefore she does it; meaning, we suspect, only a small part of what she writes. Apparently a mood has only to present itself to be expressed in verse, whether genuine or spurious. We like her better, and trust her more, when the mood described is not her own, but another's, or Nature's—as in the following portrait:

"Like the sway of the silver birch in the breeze  
of dawn  
Is her dainty way;  
Like the gray of a twilight sky or a starlit  
lawn  
Are her eyes of gray;  
Like the clouds in their moving white  
Is her breast's soft stir;  
And white as the moon and bright  
Is the soul of her.

Like murmur of woods in spring ere the  
leaves be green,  
Like the voice of a bird  
That sings by a stream that sings through  
the night unseen,  
So her voice is heard.  
And the secret her eyes withhold  
In my soul abides,  
For white as the moon and cold  
Is the heart she hides."

Or as in these three fresh descriptive stanzas:

"The day was wild with wind and rain,  
One grey wrapped sky and sea and shore,  
It seemed our marsh would never again  
Wear the rich robes that once it wore.  
The scattered farms looked sad and chill,  
Their sheltering trees writhed all awry,  
And waves of mist broke on the hill  
Where once the great sea thundered by.

When God remembered this His land,  
This little land that is our own,  
He caught the rain up in His hand,  
He hid the winds behind His throne,  
He soothed the fretful waves to rest,  
He called the clouds to come away,  
And, by blue pathways, to the west,  
They went, like children tired of play.

And then God bade our marsh put on  
Its holy vestment of fine gold;  
From marge to marge the glory shone  
On lichen'd farm and fence and fold;  
In the gold sky that walled the west,  
In each transfigured stone and tree,  
The glory of God was manifest,  
Plain for a little child to see!"

And here is another poem that has some vigour. It stands distinct in the volume by reason of its suggestion of action, of which, as a rule, Miss Nesbit gives no hint. But here something is determined, done:

"Are you going for a soldier with your curly yellow hair.  
And a scarlet coat instead of the smock you used to wear?  
Are you going to drive the foe as you used to drive the plough?  
Are you going for a soldier now?"

I am going for a soldier, and my tunic is of red,  
And I'm tired of woman's chatter, and I'll hear the drum instead;  
I will break the fighting line as you broke your plighted vow.  
For I'm going for a soldier now.

For a soldier, for a soldier are you sure that you will go,  
To hear the drums a-beating and to hear the bugles blow?  
I'll make you sweeter music, for I'll swear another vow—  
Are you going for a soldier now?"

I am going for a soldier if you'd twenty vows to make;  
You must get another sweetheart, with another heart to break,  
For I'm sick of lies and women, the barrow and the plough,  
And I'm going for a soldier now!"

Miss Nesbit may give us more songs as good as that, and welcome. For invertebrate records of passing emotions, lachrymose and sentimental, we do not care. Blanche Amory's example is not a good one.

#### AGREEABLE GOSSIP.

*Many Memories of Many People.* By M. C. M. Simpson. (Edward Arnold.)

MRS. SIMPSON was the daughter of Nassau Senior, and Senior knew most people worth knowing. Therefore, her book is full of interest to the lover of gossip and anecdote. It is impossible not to envy her. To have been tossed as a child in the arms of Archbishop Whateley, to have been a pet of Sydney Smith, to have grown up in the brilliant circle which gathered round the great Lord Lansdowne, to have been the friend of De Tocqueville, Ampère, the Grotes, and the Thackerays, to have known Cavour, Guizot, Rogers, Moore, Jenny Lind, Carlyle, and a

long list of illustrious men and women; to have had, in fact, the cream of human society from childhood to old age, this is a lot given to few indeed. There is a delightful old-world touch about much of the book. Already those times are ancient history to us, the early Victorians recede into one perspective with the men of the later Georges and William IV.

One of Mrs. Simpson's earliest recollections is that she often, as a child, met the Princess Victoria in Kensington Gardens, and the Princess used to talk to her little brother. She sat in the Peers' Gallery when the Queen announced her marriage to Prince Albert, between the beautiful Lady Dufferin and a maid of honour; and she recalls "the Queen's sweet voice, and that the paper shook in her hand. By her side stood Lord Melbourne repeating inaudibly—we could see his lips move—every word she uttered." She came, in her father's library, upon "a short, dark, stout gentleman," whom her father called the Comte de Survilliers—otherwise the ex-King Joseph of Spain. He told Senior that his brother was "plutôt bon homme que grand homme." In the summer evenings the ride in Rotten Row was the correct thing, for, as Mrs. Simpson says, everybody rode in those days, even bishops; and Delane of the *Times*, or Lord Lansdowne, would canter to the side of her father and herself. But this was before she came out. She gives the details of that coming out in a note, whence we rescue them; they have the fragrance of old lavender. She wore "a pale blue silk with what was called a Swiss bodice, the sleeves and front laced over white silk. If the party had been a ball I should have worn tarlatan, as young ladies never danced in silk. I had some wheat-ears, in silver and pearls, in my hair, which was in ringlets according to the fashion of the day. I followed my parents on the arm of Lord Glenelg, who had snow-white hair, and the people around whispered, 'Spring and winter!'" It was at Lansdowne House, and the occasion was further marked by her introduction to Moore. Within the walls of Lansdowne House, Mario, Grisi, Persiani, Lablache, Tamburini sang to an audience of royalties and aristocracy, including the Duke of Wellington, and the young ladies in ringlets were thrilled. It is all "old and incredibly faded"; like the magnificent D'Orsay whom she saw dashing up to Gore House in his cabriolet, "displaying an immense extent of cuff and shirtfront, his crisp curly hair waving in the breeze . . . his diminutive tiger bumping up and down on the footboard behind." He was not so magnificent to live with as to look at. Someone said to D'Orsay of his wife: "What a charming, pensive expression Lady Harriet has!" "She owes that to me," was the reply.

Many anecdotes there are in Mrs. Simpson's book of a less cynical order than this. She tells us how Whateley, visiting her father's house without a servant, and perceiving a hole in his black stocking, would try to conceal it by putting a piece of sticking-plaster on the exposed part of his leg:

"He used to sit by my side at breakfast,

balancing his chair, with his legs twisted into some extraordinary knot, which could not be untied in a hurry, playing with the tea-leaves, and scattering them over the table, and setting down his wet cup on the cloth so as to make a succession of little rings—totally engrossed in the conversation that was going on."

There is a good story of Miss Edgeworth and her sister. They had been staying at Bowood:

"On the morning fixed for their departure Lord Lansdowne was handing her into her carriage, and said, with his exquisite urbanity: 'I am sorry you cannot stay longer'; whereupon she replied: 'Oh! but, my lord, we can.' The trunks were taken off, the carriage sent away, and the ladies returned, to the consternation of their hosts."

Of Thackeray she relates how she one day called on him to accompany her to a dinner at Greenwich. "He put his head out of his study-window and cried: 'Wait till I have killed her!' I think the victim was Helen Pendennis." There is a story of Abraham Hayward, who remarked impertinently to a certain lady: "Of course, you do not know what a *faux pas* is?" "Is it a *pas de deux*?" she retorted. And there is a funny specimen of De Circourt's English: "I was to-day at an artist's of my friends. A negress was sitting to him, and I tasted her conversation and her moral for the space of two hours, and found them quite equal to those of a white." But the real interest of the book lies in its descriptions of eminent people, which are too long for quotation, and in the extracts which are given from her father's journals. They are notes of conversations with various politicians—Lansdowne, Bright, Aberdeen, &c.—and are full of value. Altogether, this is a volume of reminiscences with hardly a really dull page.

#### BRITONS ABROAD.

*Under the Red Crescent: the Adventures of an English Surgeon with the Turkish Army at Plevna and Erzeroum, 1877-8.* Related by Charles S. Ryan, M.B., and John Sandes, B.A. (John Murray.)

*China and Formosa: the Story of a Successful Mission.* By the Rev. James Johnston. (Hazell, Watson, & Viney.)

*Sunny Memories of an Indian Winter.* By Sara H. Dunn. (Walter Scott.)

*Old Tracks and New Landmarks: Wayside Sketches in Crete, Macedonia, Mitylene, &c.* By Mary A. Walker. (Richard Bentley.)

DURING the Turkish war of 1877 Mr. Ryan occupied the position of surgeon in the Turkish army. It would not be easy to conceive of conditions more favourable for observation, and Mr. Ryan's book gives evidence of a temperament well fitting him to take advantage of his opportunities. With a rollicking humour he combines a ready sympathy with the more serious and important side of things. His intimate association with the officers and men of Osman's army has impressed upon his mind sentiments of regard and affection for



both officers and men, and the publication of his work is therefore excellently timed. The pages are bright with such amusing gossip as this:

"The war correspondents of those fighting days in Spain [the days of the Carlist insurrection] were as dare-devil a crew as ever lived; and Leader described to me, with many a laugh, the circumstances under which he first met Edward O'Donovan, another Irishman, as gay and reckless as himself. Leader was in command of a small fort in the north of Spain during the height of the insurrection, when one day he espied a strange figure clad in a long dilapidated overcoat approaching the walls. The Spanish sentries yelled to the suspicious visitor to halt; and as he took no notice of them they fired on him, and the bullets kicked up the dust all round the stranger. The only result, however, was that he increased his pace and came on at the double, until he reached the walls off [sic] the fort amid a rain of bullets. 'Cease firing, ye blackguards!' he shouted in the simple dialect of Southern Cork. 'I'm Edward O'Donovan, and how the blazes can I get in unless you open the gate!' . . . Thus it was that Edmund O'Donovan, who was attached to the Government troops, walked alone into the enemy's fortress."

The principal figure in the history of the English Presbyterian mission to the Chinese is the Rev. William C. Burns, who seems to have been a man of conviction and purpose; and the story of his efforts has a certain unexpected smack of interest. His most enduring feat, probably, has been the translation of that long-suffering volume *The Pilgrim's Progress* into the language of the country. His greatest difficulty was to discover fanciful equivalents for Bunyan's names, and he spent many days among the tombs in the search for Mr. Pliable and Mr. Facing-both-ways. He was not without a sense of humour and could appreciate a joke—at the expense of one of his brethren. Mr. Johnston paid him a visit and was invited to address the congregation.

"Although I had not studied the colloquial for more than a month or two, I learned a few sentences which I gave out boldly. They were delighted, and shouted with one voice 'Put chi ho' (. . . 'No end good'), 'Chin ho' ('First rate') . . . If I had stopped then I would have come off with flying colours, but rashly desiring to please the dear people, [I] went on until out of my depth. Though they looked so intelligently pleased, I put the question point-blank, 'Do you understand what I say?' As Christians they were too truthful to say 'Yes,' and as Chinamen too polite to say 'No'; so, after a pause, the old cloth-merchant answered, 'We shall pray to God that you may soon speak intelligibly.'"

Mr. Johnston's own humour is sometimes unconscious, as here:

"To the credit of the Chinese be it told that the 'Gospel boat' was never molested. Even pirates respected her. . . . The boatmen were not allowed to carry arms, but were instructed to present them with plenty of tracts and Bibles."

The pages are sprinkled with reproductions of photographs—mostly groups.

Mrs. Dunn is a very good traveller. She knows how to use her eyes, and she discerns alien prejudices and sentiments with sympathetic intuition. Also, her style gives evidence of conscientious en-

deavour. Consequently her *Sunny Memories* are readable memories. It was not easy to reduce to order the multiplicity of notions engendered of a brisk passage through so vast a tract, among races so widely distinct—with habits of thought and national peculiarities so various. But Mrs. Dunn, by the light of a quick intelligence, has admirably caught the leading feature of many of them; and to the reader of her entertaining book, Parsis, Tamils, Goorkhas, Rajputs, and a dozen others will stand as well apart as the Highland crofter from the Sheffield grinder. Mrs. Dunn's pages are here and there enlivened by symptoms of a pleasant humour. Take this as an example:

"We had ridden out under the awaking sky of the early morning hours; and as the pale lustrous dawn graduated into perfect day, and the sun rose glorious from behind the snows like an 'avenging fire-god,' causing the death-white Himalayas to kindle and glow in the light of his presence, a vision which made one speechless and almost breathless, our Transatlantic cousin remarked in a tone of calm finality, 'Wall, that's what I call vurry neat.'"

The illustrations are from excellent photographs.

Mrs. Walker dates her experiences as a traveller from days when travel was less a matter of course than it is to-day; and the crowded smudges of the customary kodak are replaced in this volume by some five-and-twenty clear-cut, scholarly little sketches that are full of character. A like quality of leisurely selection distinguishes the narratives, and lends to the style a certain air of placid good breeding.

## BRIEFER MENTION.

*The Artists and Engravers of British and American Book-Plates.* By Henry W. Fincham. (Kegan Paul & Co.)

IN spite of Mr. Andrew Lang the collector of book-plates increases and multiplies. That "petty, trivial, and almost idiotic ghoul" (the collector) will be glad to place this bulky volume on his shelves, which are beginning to groan under the weight of works treating of his vilified hobby. The fact is, the book-plate is an institution. Its interests are many—social, personal, heraldic, and artistic—and they appeal particularly to a growing class, the fireside antiquaries of moderate means and busy leisure. For the use of these worthy persons Mr. Fincham has compiled a list of some 1,500 artists and engravers, who are responsible for about 5,000 signed plates; a list that gaily romps away from all competitors, and is calculated to fill the lay mind with a bewildered aversion. The initiated, on the other hand, will pore over it long and lovingly; the Ex-Librist would, if he could, make it a pocket companion; but that seems impossible, for it is almost a foot tall and turns the scale at 3½ lbs. Every page of this laborious catalogue is divided into four columns, wherein are entered particulars of the artist and his signature, the name of the original possessor,

the "style" of the plate, and its date. There is an index of owners, and between seventy and eighty illustrations, including four impressions from original copper-plates, and a repulsive dream of Aubrey Beardsley's. And all this bearing upon what a critic not long ago called "the most infinitesimal of all conceivable topics"! Well, the infinitesimal and delightful Horace Walpole had his book-plate, where the paternal escutcheon dangles from the branches of a tree, beneath which is visible the neat antiquity of "Strawberry Hill"; and Mr. Gladstone himself, whom no one can call infinitesimal, uses a gift plate gallant with ensigns armorial and winged by wanton hawks.

*The Age of the Renaissance: Eras of the Christian Church.* By Paul Van Dyke. (T. & T. Clark.)

THIS is a brilliant and picturesque study of the most brilliant and picturesque period of history. The "era" dealt with by Mr. Van Dyke is, roughly, the fifteenth century; more precisely, from the return of the Pope out of the Babylonish captivity at Avignon in 1377 to the Sack of Rome by the Imperial army in 1527. There is, of course, a wealth of material for the illustration of this momentous age, and Mr. Van Dyke has selected from it skilfully and effectively. The book is to a large extent a gallery of striking portraits; and this is but natural and right, for the forces at work were precisely those which naturally came to a head and declare themselves in striking personalities. Dr. Henry Van Dyke, who was to have collaborated with his brother, and who now writes the introductory chapter, points out that the history of the Renaissance is essentially a history of the antagonism between two human types: on the one side the men of institutions, on the other the men of ideas. Here this antagonism is studied from the point of view of the Church: the attempts, within the Church to reform it, without the Church to reform religion, are the central theme. And Humanism proper is studied as a radical change in the attitude of the educated mind which prepared it for the Reformation. Our pleasure in Mr. Van Dyke's treatment of his subject is lessened by his use of such provincialisms as "loaned" for "lent" and "apologetes" for "apologists." Otherwise the manner, as well as the matter of the book, is of high quality.

*The Hill of the Graces.* By H. S. Cowper, F.S.A. (Methuen).

EUROPEAN travel in the centre of Tripoli has been prohibited by the Turks since 1880. This proved an irresistible attraction to Mr. Cowper, who left the capital both in 1895 and 1896 "for a few days' sport," and wandered at will through the districts of Gharian, Tarhuna, and M'salata. Mr. Cowper's chief object was the study of the megalithic ruins known as "senams," which he describes at length in this interesting volume. "Senams" are vast trilithons, looking like lofty and exceedingly narrow gateways. Before each stands the altar of some extinct ritual. Mr. Cowper believes

man in pressing, curious crowds, whispering loudly: "That's he! That's the man," all anxious to catch sight of such an immoral writer. Zola turned his back deliberately on those excellent citizens, and gazed steadily with an interested air at the ceiling! He knew them, and he knew what they thought of him! At the present moment we have the rival *bourgeoisie* pelting the same man's doors with filth, and imprisoning him and his publisher together. Meanwhile, our English press and public solemnly applaud the great writer. But in both cases the imprisonment was meted out for the same offence—it was for the telling of inconvenient truths.

### MR. GISSING ON DICKENS.

*Charles Dickens.* By George Gissing. "Victorian Era Series." (Blackie.)

THE intelligent reader will not be surprised to find Mr. Gissing making his bow, for the first time, as a critic and a critic of fiction. The author of *New Grub Street* has always shown himself preoccupied with art as well as life. His own creative method has been a conscious one, deliberately pursued, and from time to time he has let us see that the problems which the choice of a method inevitably raises are not without their considerable interest for him. Criticism has peeped out through the novels. The present book, however, is criticism pure and simple. Subject to the general plan of the "Victorian Era Series," which was intended to include in its record of the age "the life-work of its typical and influential men," it was probably open to Mr. Gissing to deal with his subject much as he pleased: and he has chosen to treat it mainly after the fashion of a "critical study," subordinating biography, except in so far as biography was necessary to formulate the conditions under which Dickens worked. We may as well say at once that Mr. Gissing's first essay in criticism seems to us quite unusually successful. He has, of course, something to learn. It would, perhaps, have been wiser, for instance, to have planned the book as a study in development, and to have avoided such an arbitrary arrangement of material and topics as the division under aspects, which he actually adopts, makes necessary. "Characterisation," "Satiric Portraiture," "Women and Children": these are the titles of three successive chapters, and it is a fine object-lesson in tautology and cross-division that they imply. And Mr. Gissing has, unfortunately, to struggle against a somewhat jerky and rough-hewn style, full of imperfectly related clauses and uglinesses of speech, which, if it does something to mar his novels, is to our mind even more offensive in a critical work. It is the lack of these two qualities, the architectural sense and the sense of the beautiful and the appropriate in language, that alone prevent Mr. Gissing's book from belonging to the first rank of critical literature. Nevertheless, Mr. Gissing's is thoroughly good criticism; primarily because it is the criticism of an expert, and an expert who

has approached his subject at once with complete sympathy and with a clear perception of the very vital differences of method between his own work and that which he is examining. Mr. Gissing is by no means of Dickens's school; yet one feels that he writes of Dickens out of profound admiration and exhaustive knowledge; he has soaked himself in Dickens, and what he has to say is said at first-hand, without much reference to conventional criticisms.

It is, of course, precisely the difference in methods and ideals between critic and criticised that gives the performance its chief interest. Dickens and Mr. Gissing have just enough in common to make their essential divergence the more remarkable. The younger writer, like the older, finds his material mainly in the crowded life of the modern city, and mainly in those strata of city life which are formed by the so-called lower and middle classes. Yet between them there is a great gulf fixed. Since Dickens, the novelist has discovered that his work, too, is an art; he has become self-conscious; has set an austere ideal before him. In Dickens, as in the average novel-writer of his day, this development had hardly taken place. If he was self-conscious of anything, it was of a mission, rather than an art. In Mr. Gissing, on the other hand, through temperament and through training, the modern spirit finds very characteristic expression. His natural attitude to his material is that of a realism which to Dickens would have seemed uncalled for and undesirable. Mr. Gissing, however, is not so pre-occupied with his own methods as to be unable to enter with the requisite detachment into those of his predecessor; his discussion of Dickens's veracity is a fine as well as a searching piece of analysis.

The common objection of readers brought up in the modern school to Dickens is certainly his "unreality"; and this in face of the fact that he clearly regarded himself as a painter of real life:

"Had the word been in use he must necessarily have called himself a Realist. It is one of the biographical commonplaces concerning Dickens. Everyone knows how he excited himself over his writing, how he laughed and cried over his imaginary people, how he had all but made himself ill with grief over the death of little Nell or of Paul Dombey."

Even his grotesques—Quilp, Mantalini, Sam Weller—are intended for transcripts from real life, transcripts of its eccentricities. They are not acknowledged figments of the poetic imagination, like Don Quixote or the White Knight. Dickens's world is not confessedly a dream-world, or a world of romance. And yet with realism, as we now regard realism, the whole thing has patently nothing to do. In explaining this, Mr. Gissing would distinguish. The true "unreality" of a Dickens is an unreality of incident and plot. He is an incorrigible sentimentalist, who will never refuse to gladden his readers with a happy ending:

"Ah, those final chapters of Dickens! How eagerly they are read by the young, and with what a pleasant smile by elders who prize the good things of literature! No one is forgotten,

and many an unsuspected bit of happiness calls aloud for gratitude to the author. Do you remember Mr. Mell, the underpaid and bullied usher in *David Copperfield*—the poor, broken-spirited fellow whose boots will not bear another mending—who uses an hour of liberty to visit his mother in the almshouse, and gladden her heart by piping sorry music on his flute? We lose sight of him, utterly; knowing only that he has been sent about his business after provoking the displeasure of the insolent lad Steerforth. Then, do you remember how, at the end of the book, David has news from Australia, delicious news about Mr. Micawber, and Mr. Gummidge, and sundry other people, and how in reading the colonial paper he suddenly comes upon the name of *Dr. Mell*, a distinguished man at the Antipodes? Who so stubborn a theorist that the kindly figment of the imagination does not please him? Who would prefer to learn the cold fact that Mell, the rejected usher, sank from stage to stage of wretchedness and died—uncertain which—in the street or the workhouse?"

Mr. Gissing, one gathers, would find the roots of this tendency in Dickens in the fact that Dickens's public liked happy endings, and that Dickens never conceived it to be his business to do other than gratify them. "In this respect a pure democrat, he believed, probably without ever reflecting upon it, that the approval of the people was necessarily the supreme in art." Nor was he in this doing violence to his own feelings. He shared to the full the preferences and the prejudices of his public. By temperament he was himself a genial optimist. "Nature made him the mouthpiece of his kind, in all that relates to simple emotions and homely thought." Mr. Gissing might have added here, that he had the theatrical instinct, as it is understood at the Adelphi, strongly developed. It is surely the same order of ideas to which belongs the melodramatic tragedy of Bill Sikes or Jonas Chuzzlewit that infallibly turns the conclusion of every novel into the semblance of a Christmas-card.

Artificial and sentimental as Dickens's plots may be, Mr. Gissing does not incline to find the same qualities in his characterisation. Exceptions must be made: some of Dickens's characters remain shadowy; others, in particular the villains and other persons of strong passions, fail to convince; but for the great bulk Mr. Gissing would claim veracity in the highest sense. They are idealised, of course; in the lower sense, by the omission of features the contemplation of which would have been painful alike to the novelist and to his readers. To match Dickens's idealism at its best, Mr. Gissing would go to the creator of Falstaff and Dame Quickly and Juliet's Nurse. Take Mrs. Gamp, idealised, in every sense, otherwise she had been intolerable, but with the essential wonderfully retained.

"Vulgarity he leaves, that is of the essence of the matter; vulgarity unsurpassable is the note of Mrs. Gamp. Vileness, on the other hand, becomes grotesquerie, wonderfully converted into a subject of laughter. Her speech, the basest ever heard from human tongue, by a process of infinite subtlety, which leaves it the same, yet not the same, is made an endless amusement, a source of quotation for laughing lips incapable of unclean utterance. . . . Do you ask for the Platonic idea of London's monthly nurse early in Queen Victoria's reign?



Dickens shows it you embodied. At such a thing as this, crawling between earth and heaven, what can one do but laugh? Its existence is a puzzle, a wonder. The class it represents shall be got rid of as speedily as possible; well and good, we cannot tolerate such a public nuisance. But the individual—so perfect a specimen—shall be preserved for all time by the magic of a great writer's deep-seated humour, and shall be known as Mrs. Gamp."

Humour, no doubt, is the solvent, making possible and credible a far greater amount of idealism of whatever type than plain, straightforward portraiture will endure.

Mr. Gissing's chapters are full of matter, and we must needs leave most of it untouched. He defends the pathos of Dickens, even as it shapes itself in the death-beds of Paul Dombey and of Little Nell. Not "cheap" or "mawkish," he declares, because not "flagrantly untrue." Well, we would gladly break a lance with him here, but not at the fag-end of an article. Besides, room must assuredly be found for the very curious passage in which, commenting upon Dickens's portraiture of middle-class women, Mr. Gissing suddenly breaks out into vehement declamation against the whole type discussed:

"These remarkable creatures belong for the most part to one rank of life, that which we vaguely designate as the lower middle class. In general their circumstances are comfortable; they suffer no hardship—save that of birth, which they do not perceive as such; nothing is asked of them but a quiet and amiable discharge of household duties—they are treated by their male kindred with great, often with extraordinary, consideration. Yet their characteristic is acidity of temper and boundless licence of querulous or insulting talk. The real business of their lives is to make all about them as uncomfortable as they can. Invariably they are unintelligent and untaught; very often they are flagrantly imbecile. Their very virtues (if such persons can be said to have any) become a scourge. In the high-ways and byways of life, by the fireside, and in the bed-chamber, their voices shrill upon the terrified ear. It is difficult to believe that death can stifle them; one imagines them upon the threshold of some other world, sounding confusion among unhappy spirits who hoped to have found peace."

No doubt this is the middle-class woman as Mr. Gissing sees her; but has it much to do with Dickens? And if occasionally, shadowing it forth in humour, he draws such a picture, he certainly would not have subscribed to the further statement that "such women are a multitude no man can number; every other house in the cheap suburbs will be found to contain at least one specimen—very often two, for the advantage of quarrelling when men are not at hand." Can it be that this passage was really intended for one of Mr. Gissing's own novels, and that it has unwittingly got mixed up with his Dickens slips? In any case, it is out of the plane of a book remarkable, as a whole, for its sympathetic and tolerant attitude.

#### NOT TO BE READ AT ALL.

*To be Read at Dusk, and Other Stories, Studies, and Sketches.* By Charles Dickens. (Redway.)

THE reputation of Dickens may brave criticism and endure the stream of time, but it will not be exalted by such *débris* as Mr. F. G. Kitton has unearthed from the pages of *Household Words* and elsewhere and collected under the title of *To be Read at Dusk*. The expiration of copyright seems to have rendered it possible for him to publish things which Dickens's responsible literary executors wisely left in oblivion. We are not grateful for so shameless a piece of book-making. These articles were mere journalism at best, by no means intended for a permanent existence. And the majority of them are quite unworthy of being paraded under the name of a great writer. The humour is worn very thin, so thin that you readily recognise the threads from which some middle-class humorists of our own day derive. The more serious pieces take Dickens quite out of his sphere. They are merely of the nature of leading articles on topics of the day. And to disinter the criticism of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood with its would-be funny description of Millais' "Carpenter's Shop," and its total want of artistic discernment or understanding, was a cruel thing.

#### FACILE EMOTIONS.

*Songs of Love and Empire.* By E. Nesbit. (Constable & Co.)

MISS NESBIT is not so easily summed up as are some of her sisters in poesy. She says so many conflicting things, offers so many changes of mood, that we are confused. And in *A Pomander of Verse*, her previous book, there were characteristics and excellences, not more than hinted at in the volume before us. There was a spring song, beginning, "The silver birch is a dainty lady," perfect in its simple way, and there were touches of ironical humour. Here it is mostly patriotism and plaintiveness, and we miss both the simplicity of the spring song and the ironical humour. More, we begin to doubt the author's sincerity. We begin to say, Has Miss Nesbit her own thoughts at all, or only sentimental ideals and memories? We know that she is quick to note Nature's changes, and sensitive to sun and gloom; but has she a point of view? has she a personality? Another book like the one before us we should say No; yet the memory of *A Pomander of Verse* convinces us that she has.

The new volume opens patriotically. When the Diamond Jubilee called for celebration, Miss Nesbit was at hand to celebrate it: and here is the result. Her loyalty is unimpeachable, and she has set it prettily enough to music. The rest of the book is given to Love, and all the joys and pains that surge in Love's wake. Miss Nesbit shows herself the comrade both of

those that love and are gay and of those that love and are sorrowful. We do not say that she consoles; yet she indicates that she also has dwelt in the land of shadows, and as in mere companionship in adversity there is some consolation, it is possible for the disappointed to enjoy the grey delights of mutual grief as they read. But let them beware: Miss Nesbit's poems are dedicated to her husband!

Here are three stanzas of despair:

"Wide downs all gray, with gray of clouds  
roofed over,  
Chill fields stripped naked of their gown  
of grain,  
Small fields of rain-wet grass and close-grown  
clover,  
Wet, wind-blown trees—and, over all, the  
rain.

Does memory lie? For Hope her missal  
closes

So far away the may and roses seem;  
Ah! was there ever a garden red with roses?  
Ah! were you ever mine save in a dream?

So long it is since Spring, the skylark waking  
Heard her own praises in his perfect strain;  
Low hang the clouds, the sad year's heart is  
breaking,  
And mine, my heart—and, over all, the  
rain."

A few lyrics as hopeless and as deftly turned as that, and the blighted reader dissolves away! Miss Nesbit is probably too much in the thrall of sentiment, too little disposed to fight against difficulties. To sing in the minor key is easier than to sing in the major, and therefore she does it; meaning, we suspect, only a small part of what she writes. Apparently a mood has only to present itself to be expressed in verse, whether genuine or spurious. We like her better, and trust her more, when the mood described is not her own, but another's, or Nature's—as in the following portrait:

"Like the sway of the silver birch in the breeze  
of dawn  
Is her dainty way;  
Like the gray of a twilight sky or a starlit  
lawn  
Are her eyes of gray;  
Like the clouds in their moving white  
Is her breast's soft stir;  
And white as the moon and bright  
Is the soul of her.

Like murmur of woods in spring ere the  
leaves be green,  
Like the voice of a bird  
That sings by a stream that sings through  
the night unseen,  
So her voice is heard.  
And the secret her eyes withhold  
In my soul abides,  
For white as the moon and cold  
Is the heart she hides."

Or as in these three fresh descriptive stanzas:

"The day was wild with wind and rain,  
One grey wrapped sky and sea and shore,  
It seemed our marsh would never again  
Wear the rich robes that once it wore.  
The scattered farms looked sad and chill,  
Their sheltering trees writhed all awry,  
And waves of mist broke on the hill  
Where once the great sea thundered by.

When God remembered this His land,  
This little land that is our own,  
He caught the rain up in His hand,  
He hid the winds behind His throne,  
He soothed the fretful waves to rest,  
He called the clouds to come away,  
And, by blue pathways, to the west,  
They went, like children tired of play.

And then God bade our marsh put on  
Its holy vestment of fine gold;  
From marge to marge the glory shone  
On lichened farm and fence and fold;  
In the gold sky that walled the west,  
In each transfigured stone and tree,  
The glory of God was manifest,  
Plain for a little child to see!"

And here is another poem that has some vigour. It stands distinct in the volume by reason of its suggestion of action, of which, as a rule, Miss Nesbit gives no hint. But here something is determined, done:

"Are you going for a soldier with your curly yellow hair.  
And a scarlet coat instead of the smock you used to wear?  
Are you going to drive the foe as you used to drive the plough?  
Are you going for a soldier now?"

I am going for a soldier, and my tunic is of red,  
And I'm tired of woman's chatter, and I'll hear the drum instead;  
I will break the fighting line as you broke your plighted vow,  
For I'm going for a soldier now.

For a soldier, for a soldier are you sure that you will go,  
To hear the drums a-beating and to hear the bugles blow?  
I'll make you sweeter music, for I'll swear another vow—  
Are you going for a soldier now?"

I am going for a soldier if you'd twenty vows to make;  
You must get another sweetheart, with another heart to break,  
For I'm sick of lies and women, the barrow and the plough,  
And I'm going for a soldier now!"

Miss Nesbit may give us more songs as good as that, and welcome. For invertebrate records of passing emotions, lachrymose and sentimental, we do not care. Blanche Amory's example is not a good one.

#### AGREEABLE GOSSIP.

*Many Memories of Many People.* By M. C. M. Simpson. (Edward Arnold.)

MRS. SIMPSON was the daughter of Nassau Senior, and Senior knew most people worth knowing. Therefore, her book is full of interest to the lover of gossip and anecdote. It is impossible not to envy her. To have been tossed as a child in the arms of Archbishop Whateley, to have been a pet of Sydney Smith, to have grown up in the brilliant circle which gathered round the great Lord Lansdowne, to have been the friend of De Tocqueville, Ampère, the Grotes, and the Thackerays, to have known Cavour, Guizot, Rogers, Moore, Jenny Lind, Carlyle, and a

long list of illustrious men and women; to have had, in fact, the cream of human society from childhood to old age, this is a lot given to few indeed. There is a delightful old-world touch about much of the book. Already those times are ancient history to us, the early Victorians recede into one perspective with the men of the later Georges and William IV.

One of Mrs. Simpson's earliest recollections is that she often, as a child, met the Princess Victoria in Kensington Gardens, and the Princess used to talk to her little brother. She sat in the Peers' Gallery when the Queen announced her marriage to Prince Albert, between the beautiful Lady Dufferin and a maid of honour; and she recalls "the Queen's sweet voice, and that the paper shook in her hand. By her side stood Lord Melbourne repeating inaudibly—we could see his lips move—every word she uttered." She came, in her father's library, upon "a short, dark, stout gentleman," whom her father called the Comte de Survilliers—otherwise the ex-King Joseph of Spain. He told Senior that his brother was "plutôt bon homme que grand homme." In the summer evenings the ride in Rotten Row was the correct thing, for, as Mrs. Simpson says, everybody rode in those days, even bishops; and Delane of the *Times*, or Lord Lansdowne, would canter to the side of her father and herself. But this was before she came out. She gives the details of that coming out in a note, whence we rescue them; they have the fragrance of old lavender. She wore "a pale blue silk with what was called a Swiss bodice, the sleeves and front laced over white silk. If the party had been a ball I should have worn tarlatan, as young ladies never danced in silk. I had some wheat-ears, in silver and pearls, in my hair, which was in ringlets according to the fashion of the day. I followed my parents on the arm of Lord Glenelg, who had snow-white hair, and the people around whispered, 'Spring and winter!'" It was at Lansdowne House, and the occasion was further marked by her introduction to Moore. Within the walls of Lansdowne House, Mario, Grisi, Persiani, Lablache, Tamburini sang to an audience of royalties and aristocracy, including the Duke of Wellington, and the young ladies in ringlets were thrilled. It is all "old and incredibly faded"; like the magnificent D'Orsay whom she saw dashing up to Gore House in his cabriolet, "displaying an immense extent of cuff and shirtfront, his crisp curly hair waving in the breeze . . . his diminutive tiger bumping up and down on the footboard behind." He was not so magnificent to live with as to look at. Someone said to D'Orsay of his wife: "What a charming, *pensive* expression Lady Harriet has!" "She owes that to me," was the reply.

Many anecdotes there are in Mrs. Simpson's book of a less cynical order than this. She tells us how Whateley, visiting her father's house without a servant, and perceiving a hole in his black stocking, would try to conceal it by putting a piece of sticking-plaster on the exposed part of his leg:

"He used to sit by my side at breakfast,

balancing his chair, with his legs twisted into some extraordinary knot, which could not be untied in a hurry, playing with the tea-leaves, and scattering them over the table, and setting down his wet cup on the cloth so as to make a succession of little rings—totally engrossed in the conversation that was going on."

There is a good story of Miss Edgeworth and her sister. They had been staying at Bowood:

"On the morning fixed for their departure Lord Lansdowne was handing her into her carriage, and said, with his exquisite urbanity: 'I am sorry you cannot stay longer'; whereupon she replied: 'Oh! but, my lord, we can.' The trunks were taken off, the carriage sent away, and the ladies returned, to the consternation of their hosts."

Of Thackeray she relates how she one day called on him to accompany her to a dinner at Greenwich. "He put his head out of his study-window and cried: 'Wait till I have killed her!' I think the victim was Helen Pendennis." There is a story of Abraham Hayward, who remarked impertinently to a certain lady: "Of course, *you* do not know what a *faux pas* is?" "Is it a *pas de deux*?" she retorted. And there is a funny specimen of De Circourt's English: "I was to-day at an artist's of my friends. A negress was sitting to him, and I tasted her conversation and her moral for the space of two hours, and found them quite equal to those of a white." But the real interest of the book lies in its descriptions of eminent people, which are too long for quotation, and in the extracts which are given from her father's journals. They are notes of conversations with various politicians—Lansdowne, Bright, Aberdeen, &c.—and are full of value. Altogether, this is a volume of reminiscences with hardly a really dull page.

#### BRITONS ABROAD.

*Under the Red Crescent: the Adventures of an English Surgeon with the Turkish Army at Plevna and Erzeroum, 1877-8.* Related by Charles S. Ryan, M.B., and John Sandes, B.A. (John Murray.)

*China and Formosa: the Story of a Successful Mission.* By the Rev. James Johnston. (Hazell, Watson, & Viney.)

*Sunny Memories of an Indian Winter.* By Sara H. Dunn. (Walter Scott.)

*Old Tracks and New Landmarks: Wayside Sketches in Crete, Macedonia, Mitylene, &c.* By Mary A. Walker. (Richard Bentley.)

DURING the Turkish war of 1877 Mr. Ryan occupied the position of surgeon in the Turkish army. It would not be easy to conceive of conditions more favourable for observation, and Mr. Ryan's book gives evidence of a temperament well fitting him to take advantage of his opportunities. With a rollicking humour he combines a ready sympathy with the more serious and important side of things. His intimate association with the officers and men of Osman's army has impressed upon his mind sentiments of regard and affection for



both officers and men, and the publication of his work is therefore excellently timed. The pages are bright with such amusing gossip as this:

"The war correspondents of those fighting days in Spain [the days of the Carlist insurrection] were as dare-devil a crew as ever lived; and Leader described to me, with many a laugh, the circumstances under which he first met Edward O'Donovan, another Irishman, as gay and reckless as himself. Leader was in command of a small fort in the north of Spain during the height of the insurrection, when one day he espied a strange figure clad in a long dilapidated overcoat approaching the walls. The Spanish sentries yelled to the suspicious visitor to halt; and as he took no notice of them they fired on him, and the bullets kicked up the dust all round the stranger. The only result, however, was that he increased his pace and came on at the double, until he reached the walls off [sic] the fort amid a rain of bullets. 'Cease firing, ye blackguards!' he shouted in the simple dialect of Southern Cork. 'I'm Edward O'Donovan, and how the blazes can I get in unless you open the gate!' . . . Thus it was that Edmund O'Donovan, who was attached to the Government troops, walked alone into the enemy's fortress."

The principal figure in the history of the English Presbyterian mission to the Chinese is the Rev. William C. Burns, who seems to have been a man of conviction and purpose; and the story of his efforts has a certain unexpected smack of interest. His most enduring feat, probably, has been the translation of that long-suffering volume *The Pilgrim's Progress* into the language of the country. His greatest difficulty was to discover fanciful equivalents for Bunyan's names, and he spent many days among the tombs in the search for Mr. Pliable and Mr. Facing-both-ways. He was not without a sense of humour and could appreciate a joke—at the expense of one of his brethren. Mr. Johnston paid him a visit and was invited to address the congregation.

"Although I had not studied the colloquial for more than a month or two, I learned a few sentences which I gave out boldly. They were delighted, and shouted with one voice 'Put chi ho' (. . . 'No end good'), 'Chin ho' ('First rate') . . . If I had stopped then I would have come off with flying colours, but rashly desiring to please the dear people, [I] went on until out of my depth. Though they looked so intelligently pleased, I put the question point-blank, 'Do you understand what I say?' As Christians they were too truthful to say 'Yes,' and as Chinamen too polite to say 'No'; so, after a pause, the old cloth-merchant answered, 'We shall pray to God that you may soon speak intelligibly.'"

Mr. Johnston's own humour is sometimes unconscious, as here:

"To the credit of the Chinese be it told that the 'Gospel boat' was never molested. Even pirates respected her. . . . The boatmen were not allowed to carry arms, but were instructed to present them with plenty of tracts and Bibles."

The pages are sprinkled with reproductions of photographs—mostly groups.

Mrs. Dunn is a very good traveller. She knows how to use her eyes, and she discerns alien prejudices and sentiments with sympathetic intuition. Also, her style gives evidence of conscientious en-

deavour. Consequently her *Sunny Memories* are readable memories. It was not easy to reduce to order the multiplicity of notions engendered of a brisk passage through so vast a tract, among races so widely distinct—with habits of thought and national peculiarities so various. But Mrs. Dunn, by the light of a quick intelligence, has admirably caught the leading feature of many of them; and to the reader of her entertaining book, Parsis, Tamils, Goorkhas, Rajputs, and a dozen others will stand as well apart as the Highland crofter from the Sheffield grinder. Mrs. Dunn's pages are here and there enlivened by symptoms of a pleasant humour. Take this as an example:

"We had ridden out under the awaking sky of the early morning hours; and as the pale lustrous dawn graduated into perfect day, and the sun rose glorious from behind the snows like an 'avenging fire-god,' causing the death-white Himalayas to kindle and glow in the light of his presence, a vision which made one speechless and almost breathless, our Transatlantic cousin remarked in a tone of calm finality, 'Wall, that's what I call vurry neat.'"

The illustrations are from excellent photographs.

Mrs. Walker dates her experiences as a traveller from days when travel was less a matter of course than it is to-day; and the crowded smudges of the customary kodak are replaced in this volume by some five-and-twenty clear-cut, scholarly little sketches that are full of character. A like quality of leisurely selection distinguishes the narratives, and lends to the style a certain air of placid good breeding.

## BRIEFER MENTION.

*The Artists and Engravers of British and American Book-Plates.* By Henry W. Fincham. (Kegan Paul & Co.)

IN spite of Mr. Andrew Lang the collector of book-plates increases and multiplies. That "petty, trivial, and almost idiotic ghoul" (the collector) will be glad to place this bulky volume on his shelves, which are beginning to groan under the weight of works treating of his vilified hobby. The fact is, the book-plate is an institution. Its interests are many—social, personal, heraldic, and artistic—and they appeal particularly to a growing class, the fireside antiquaries of moderate means and busy leisure. For the use of these worthy persons Mr. Fincham has compiled a list of some 1,500 artists and engravers, who are responsible for about 5,000 signed plates; a list that gaily romps away from all competitors, and is calculated to fill the lay mind with a bewildered aversion. The initiated, on the other hand, will pore over it long and lovingly; the Ex-Librist would, if he could, make it a pocket companion; but that seems impossible, for it is almost a foot tall and turns the scale at 3½ lbs. Every page of this laborious catalogue is divided into four columns, wherein are entered particulars of the artist and his signature, the name of the original possessor,

the "style" of the plate, and its date. There is an index of owners, and between seventy and eighty illustrations, including four impressions from original copper-plates, and a repulsive dream of Aubrey Beardsley's. And all this bearing upon what a critic not long ago called "the most infinitesimal of all conceivable topics"! Well, the infinitesimal and delightful Horace Walpole had his book-plate, where the paternal escutcheon dangles from the branches of a tree, beneath which is visible the neat antiquity of "Strawberry Hill"; and Mr. Gladstone himself, whom no one can call infinitesimal, uses a gift plate gallant with ensigns armorial and winged by wanton hawks.

*The Age of the Renaissance: Eras of the Christian Church.* By Paul Van Dyke. (T. & T. Clark.)

THIS is a brilliant and picturesque study of the most brilliant and picturesque period of history. The "era" dealt with by Mr. Van Dyke is, roughly, the fifteenth century; more precisely, from the return of the Pope out of the Babylonish captivity at Avignon in 1377 to the Sack of Rome by the Imperial army in 1527. There is, of course, a wealth of material for the illustration of this momentous age, and Mr. Van Dyke has selected from it skilfully and effectively. The book is to a large extent a gallery of striking portraits; and this is but natural and right, for the forces at work were precisely those which naturally come to a head and declare themselves in striking personalities. Dr. Henry Van Dyke, who was to have collaborated with his brother, and who now writes the introductory chapter, points out that the history of the Renaissance is essentially a history of the antagonism between two human types: on the one side the men of institutions, on the other the men of ideas. Here this antagonism is studied from the point of view of the Church: the attempts, within the Church to reform it, without the Church to reform religion, are the central theme. And Humanism proper is studied as a radical change in the attitude of the educated mind which prepared it for the Reformation. Our pleasure in Mr. Van Dyke's treatment of his subject is lessened by his use of such provincialisms as "loaned" for "lent" and "apologetes" for "apologists." Otherwise the manner, as well as the matter of the book, is of high quality.

*The Hill of the Graces.* By H. S. Cowper, F.S.A. (Methuen).

EUROPEAN travel in the centre of Tripoli has been prohibited by the Turks since 1880. This proved an irresistible attraction to Mr. Cowper, who left the capital both in 1895 and 1896 "for a few days' sport," and wandered at will through the districts of Gharian, Tarhuna, and M'salata. Mr. Cowper's chief object was the study of the megalithic ruins known as "senams," which he describes at length in this interesting volume. "Senams" are vast trilithons, looking like lofty and exceedingly narrow gateways. Before each stands the altar of some extinct ritual. Mr. Cowper believes

that through these "senams" victims were led to the sacrifice. He identifies them with the *Asherim* or "groves" which the worshippers of Baal set up on high places, and believes—fatal propensity of the archaeological mind—that they may also shed light upon the nature of Stonehenge. In any case, his book, with its illustrations and its careful tabulation of the extant ruins, should be a useful addition to the literature of a little worked subject. Mr. Cowper is not so intent upon "senams" as to have no eyes for anything else. He gives an excellent account of Tripoli and its manners and customs, together with a plan of the capital, which, as surveying instruments are contraband in Turkish dominions, he accomplished by the primitive means of pacing and a prismatic compass. He has also succeeded in identifying the river Cinyps and the three-peaked hill of the Graces mentioned by Herodotus, and of restoring, on yet another point, our belief in that historian's much maligned veracity.

*The Battle of Sheriffmuir.* Related from Original Sources. (Stirling: Eneas Mackay.)

THIS little pamphlet does credit to its producers, though the "twenty original pen-and-ink drawings" are remarkably indistinct. It represents a class of work we would be glad to see more of—the serious contribution to local history. Its author has told the tale of the battle of Sheriffmuir with special attention to the configuration of the ground, and the details of the fight and the opposing forces are lucidly set down.

The Scots proverb, "There was mair tint at Shirramuir," is really justified, for though the battle was actually indecisive, it had the same effect on the Jacobite fortunes as a crushing defeat, for it prevented Mar's junction with the English Jacobites, and delayed the whole rising at a time when haste was most necessary. The narrative here is by no means full, for though it shows abundantly Mar's wretched incapacity as a general, it does not do justice to the great elements of disaffection to the forces themselves. The Stuarts of Appir and the Camerons of Lochiel apparently never went into the engagement at all. Lord Huntly and the Master of Sinclair, as is evident from Sinclair's own narrative, were anxious to lay down their arms before the battle. It was not without reason that Gordon of Glenbucket in his disgust cried, "Oh, for an hour of Dundee!"

When the author was about it he might have collected in his appendix some of the sayings relating to the battle, such as Argyle's

"If it wasna weel bobbet, we'll bobbet it again";

and the famous, "I lost my father and my mither, and a guid buff belt that was worth them baith." Nor is the list of songs referring to Sheriffmuir quite complete. He gives two versions of the "Battle of Sheriffmuir," but he does not seem to be aware of the third and condensed form (No. 282 in Johnson) into which Burns threw the ballad. The first version is set down without the author's name, but it is preserved on a

broadside in the British Museum as "The Race at Sheriffmuir, Fairly Run on the 13th of November, 1715," by the Rev. Murdoch McLennan, of Crathie, who at the time of the battle was some fourteen years of age. One other omission we have noticed, "The Marquis of Huntly's Retreat from the Battle of Sheriffmuir," which was reprinted in the 1844 edition of Motherwell's *New Book of Old Ballads*.

*Progress in Women's Education.* Edited by the Countess of Warwick. (Longmans, Green & Co.)

DURING the Victorian Era Exhibition last summer a large number of ladies gathered together at Earl's Court and read one another papers on the advance of woman in culture and commerce all over the British Empire. These are the papers, put into print and arranged by Lady Warwick, who also writes a preface. We do not know how they sounded from the lips of their composers; but they are very, very solemn reading, and we must admit that, having read four accounts of the education of women in India, we felt unable to face the remaining four, especially as, broadly speaking, women in India are not educated at all. To such, however, as are nervous of the encroachment of women upon men's employments the book carries consolation. For it would appear that women are still little more than gleaners in the field of labour, and, except in the case of city clerkships, are rather creating new demands than ousting the suppliers of already existing needs.

From the papers on education we gather that women can go in for an astounding number of examinations, and that seems to please them. Yet they yearn for more. Miss Nancy Bailey, who is a professional indexer, wants all indexers to combine and hold examinations and grant certificates.

We were most interested in Miss Cecil Gradwell's paper on "The Training of Women in Business." Miss Gradwell points out that women are very much addicted to starting a business without knowing anything about it, instead of expending a portion of their capital in learning its details. Also, they very soon grow tired of it:

"One often finds that those to whom work of any kind is absolutely novel enter into it, when necessity arises, with infinite courage and even enthusiasm. They bend the neck to the yoke unflinchingly, and serve their employers with loyalty and devotion. But as time goes on the monotony becomes irksome; they tire of their work, and though not less well done, it begins to be drudgery, and a time of struggle supervenes. One wonders if men go through the same stage; if they do, I suppose they feel it is no use kicking against the pricks, and, therefore, say nothing about it. If this is so, women might do well to imitate their philosophy."

We may tell Miss Gradwell that this is certainly so, and that any work which has to be done continually, regularly, and without reference to inclination inevitably becomes drudgery. And women will not be trained for business until they realise

that business is not fun, even when, as in the case of the professional jester, fun is business.

*The Campaign of Marengo.* With Comments by H. H. Sargent. (Kegan Paul.)

THIS is the work of an American cavalry officer and student of tactics. Lieutenant Sargent studies the great campaign of 1800 mainly from a military and strategical point of view. He describes the relative situation of the French and Austrian armies on the Rhine and in Italy, the formation of that incredible Army of the Reserve at Geneva, the stupendous march in the wake of Hannibal over the Great St. Bernard, the sudden descent between Melas and his base, and the decisive battle which left the French masters of Italy and Napoleon master of France. Lieutenant Sargent's comments are most clear and informing to the lay mind. It is his object to track the secret of Napoleon's genius as a commander-in-chief by an analysis of his most brilliant and critical campaign; and he analyses in a luminous manner the mental qualities which composed that genius. The curious thing is that, great as were the qualities which Napoleon displayed on the field of Marengo, he had no business to be there. His calculations had gone wrong: he was surprised and outnumbered; and it was only by an heroic effort that he pulled a triumph out of an impending and irretrievable disaster.

*The Coldstream Guards in the Crimea.* By Lieut.-Col. Ross - of - Bladensburg, C.B. (Innes.)

THIS is in reality a reprint of a portion of the *History of the Coldstream Guards*, published by the same author a few months ago. But that was an expensive book, containing much matter of no particular interest outside the regiment. The general reader will be glad to have the extract, which contains an exceedingly interesting and detailed account of the immortal and blundering Crimean campaign from the point of view of a single corps. The Coldstream Guards distinguished itself, but no one can read this chronicle without feeling that, like its brother regiments, it was put to much unnecessary suffering for a ludicrously small result.

*English History for Children.* By Mrs. Frederick Boas. (Nisbet.)

THIS is an admirable little book for its purpose. It is written with great simplicity and clearness, and Mrs. Boas shows judgment in not overloading her narrative with facts, and in selecting for mention those that are not only important, but also picturesque and telling. We rejoice to see that the modern school of educationalists has not discarded Alfred and the cakes, and other delights of our childhood. And in other respects the advance is great, for the lesson has been learnt that education is stimulus, and that to stimulate it is essential not to stupefy. Mrs. Boas' book is liberally provided with illustrations, well-chosen and various. The portraits of Wolsey and of Oliver Cromwell are particularly good.



# THE ACADEMY SUPPLEMENT.

SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 1898.

## THE NEWEST FICTION.

### A GUIDE FOR NOVEL READERS.

#### DREAMERS OF THE GHETTO.

BY I. ZANGWILL.

This bulky volume, which contains that little masterpiece *Chad Gadya*, is not, in the ordinary sense of the term, a volume of short stories. One definite idea pervades it—viz., that the character of all Jews, whether they lived in the days of Rameses or the days of Victoria, has been influenced by practically the same forces and the same environment. This idea Mr. Zangwill has worked out in a variety of instances, blending the real with the imaginary. Moses, Heine, Beaconsfield flit through his pages alongside fictitious dreamers of the Ghetto of the fourteenth century and of our own day. In the author's own word: "This is a Chronicle of Dreamers, who have arisen in the Ghetto from its establishment in the sixteenth century to its slow breaking up in our own day. Some have become historic in Jewry; others have penetrated to the ken of the greater world and afforded models to illustrious artists in letters. . . .; the rest are personally known to me, or are, like 'Joseph, the Dreamer,' the artistic typification of many souls through which the great Ghetto dream has passed." (W. Heinemann. 470 pp. 6s.)

#### TALES OF TRAIL AND TOWN.

BY BRET HARTE.

Seven new stories by Mr. Bret Harte. All that is necessary is to say that only the author of *The Luck of Roaring Camp* could have written them, and to give their appetising titles: "The Ancestors of Peter Atherley," "Two Americans," "The Judgment of Bolinas Plain," "The Strange Experience of Alkali Dick," "A Night on the Divide," "The Youngest Prospector in Calaveras," "A Tale of Three Truants." The frontispiece, by Mr. Jacob Hood, is charming. (Chatto & Windus. 302 pp. 3s. 6d.)

#### THE INCIDENTAL BISHOP.

BY GRANT ALLEN.

A brisk story in Mr. Grant Allen's best narrative manner. The hero is Tom Pringle, a sailor on the *John Wesley*, slaver. Circumstances make it politic for Tom to assume a dead missionary's garb, and he continues clerical to the end. Tom is a good fellow, despite the fraud. The story is business-like throughout. "Hard a-starboard!" are the first words, and after that it booms along. (C. Arthur Pearson. 248 pp. 6s.)

#### THE PRIDE OF JENNICO.

BY A. AND E. CASTLE.

Mr. Egerton Castle, one of the authors of this romance, is the translator of Stevenson's *Prince Otto* into French, and should therefore know something of the technique of a good story. He has also written fiction of his own. We mentioned *Prince Otto* because the book before us suggests it. It treats of a Princeling's court, and there is intrigue here and fighting there, and a well bred air over all. The manner is distinguished. (Bentley. 346 pp. 6s.)

#### VAN WAGENER'S WAYS.

BY W. L. ALDEN.

Mr. Alden's method is well known. He has a quaint, ingenious and fertile mind, and he is American through and through. In Van Wagener he has contrived a humorous inventor, and this book is his history. "The Explosive Dog," "The Flying Cat," "Incandescent Cats," "The Amphibious Torpedo"—these are some of the titles. In default of Mr. Stockton and Max Adeler Mr. Alden will do. (C. Arthur Pearson. 204 pp. 2s. 6d.)

#### BILLY BINKS, HERO.

BY GUY BOOTHBY.

The author of *Dr. Nikola* is here seen as a writer of short stories of Australia and other lands. Billy Binks, the hero of the first, is a young Antipodean, eight years of age, dressed in a red Crimean shirt, much torn, a pair of man's trousers, and a cabbage leaf hat. He is capable of oaths of remarkable scope and atrocity, and is

good company. Mr. Boothby is a vigorous chronicler, and Billy does not suffer at his hands. The other stories are: "The Bully of Haiphong"; "A Child of Tonking"; "The Millionaire of Hornibrook Island"; "The Story of Lee Ping"; "Carrie Quin's Elopement"; "Daphne." (W. & R. Chambers. 244 pp. 3s. 6d.)

#### HIS GRACE O' THE GUNNE.

BY I. HOOPER.

The Gunne was a meeting place for thieves, and thither went Lurlin Kirke, who tells this story, in 1664. And Charles Heath the highwayman said to him: "Hey, my kinching coe, dost need another lambasting?" and gave him precepts for life. "Imprimis, be kind unto the dumb beasts. Next, when thou be'st a man, and will fag thy doxy, remember that she be weaker than thou. Do not strike too hard. Do not squeek upon thy kin, bung nypers, foisters, and the like." Later, come adventures with quality, told more intelligibly. (Black. 282 pp. 6s.)

#### WAS SHE JUSTIFIED?

BY FRANK BARRETT.

The question of the title applies principally to bigamy, which the heroine committed with the hero. The heroine's name was Ike, and she was brought up as a boy, but assumed her own sex in time to make complications. The hero was David Grant. Says the author: "Maybe you have seen David Grant; at one time he was known by sight to half London. . . . If you were at the 'Varsity boat-race in the hailstorm year you must have picked him out of the Light Blues as the smartest man of the crews. . . . You may have seen him lounging in evening dress . . . in the stalls of theatres or music-halls." The book is like this—melodrama in print. (Chatto & Windus. 309 pp. 6s.)

#### TENEBRAE.

BY ERNEST G. HENHAM.

A madman purports to narrate this story. He became mad because his brother stole his love. Therefore he killed the brother. Afterwards life was chiefly spiders. He saw spiders everywhere. They were not ordinary spiders, not even tarantulas, but larger still, as large as cows. The doctor who supplies an elucidatory appendix says of the madman's MS.: "The closing pages are most awful. The very paper seems to scream with torture." (Skeffington. 329 pp. 6s.)

#### CARPET COURTSHIP.

BY THOMAS COBB.

A society story told mainly in dialogue—clever dialogue and bright. (John Lane. 171 pp.)

#### TORN SAILS.

BY ALLEN RAINE.

This story, by the author of *A Welsh Singer*, is laid in a Welsh village. The setting bespeaks the drama. You don't have a narrow valley, a "streamlet," "rocky knolls," and stepping-stones, without a love story that moves through pain to bliss. The love-making is very tender: "Come and be the mistress of the old mill, fanwyld," says he, and what can she reply but "Caton pawb, Ivor, thou art taking my breath away"? (Hutchinson & Co. 359 pp. 6s.)

#### A SON OF ISRAEL.

BY RACHEL PENN.

This is a Russian-Jewish love-story, and it therefore bubbles with passion. David Rheba and Olga Ivanner are Jew and Christian, and they love and suffer through more than three hundred pages. The author mixes her pronouns and verbs rather badly sometimes: "I, a servant of God, hath joined your hands," says the priest, on page 115; and on the next page Olga exclaims: "Each art dragging at me." (John Macqueen. 306 pp. 6s.)

#### HER WILD OATS.

BY JOHN BICKERDYKE.

The author of *Daughters of Theopis* and other novels kindly gives a synopsis of his plot in lieu of a table of contents. From this we learn that the hero is a young English farmer, who adopts the bicycle but clings to his prejudices. She is "refined and beautiful."

Though refined and beautiful she is mysterious, which is more than can be said for the other heroine, Miss Belle Beresford. Belle's biography is written on the posters of the Piccadilly Theatre. Thus the London pavements alternate, as a background, with the "cool plash-plash backwaters above Goring." For the rest, there is a vicar called Mr. Smallmind. (Thomas Burleigh. 299 pp. 6s.)

#### THE HAND OF THE SPOILER.

BY R. H. FORSTER.

"Being the Adventures of Master Wilfrid Clavering at Corbridge, Hexham, and Elsewhere, in the Twenty-seventh, Twenty-eighth, and Twenty-ninth Years of His Late Highness, King Henry the Eighth." Corbridge and Hexham are townships on the banks of the Tyne. (Mawson, Swan & Morgan. 273 pp. 6s.)

#### HECTOR MACRAE.

BY HANNAH MACKENZIE.

A long story in small print. The authoress says that in her delineation of the modern Highlands and Highlanders she has tried to "extenuate nought, and nought set down in malice." (Simpkin, Marshall & Co. 373 pp. 6s.)

#### THE CONSECRATION OF HETTY FLEET.

BY A. ST. JOHN ADCOCK.

A story that opens in an undertaker's shop, and ends in lurid sins and melodramatic suicide. The moral is good; but Mr. Adcock was nearer to life, and far more readable, in his *East-End Idylls*. (Skeffington & Son. 141 pp. 3s. 6d.)

#### HAGAR OF THE PAWNSHOP.

BY FERGUS HUME.

Hagar flies from the encampment of the Stanleys in the New Forest to the pawnshop of her miserly old uncle, Jacob Dix, a Lambeth pawnbroker: her impelling motive being the unwelcome attentions of Goliath, a red-haired villain—"half a Gorgio and half Romany." A fine girl is Hagar, and a free-tongued; and she wakes things up in the Lambeth pawnshop, where we find her attending to ten customers in as many chapters. In Lambeth, Hagar finds a lover of roving instincts—a caravan bookseller—and with him leaves London for the green country and the gipsy life. (Skeffington & Son. 252 pp. 6s.)

#### UNDER ONE COVER.

BY S. BARING-GOULD AND OTHERS.

What can we say about these eleven stories by six writers, except to echo the publisher's pious hope that "one and all fulfil the cardinal requirements of being thoroughly readable and interesting." (Skeffington & Son. 255 pp. 3s. 6d.)

## REVIEWS.

*The Broom of the War-God.* By Henry Noel Brailsford.  
(William Heinemann.)

A CASUAL glance at this tale of the late Turco-Greek war indicates that the author has some of the qualities required for a successful novelist. He can observe minutely, and record his observations with a rough picturesqueness. Mr. Brailsford's story is absolutely devoid of plot, and its hero is a sentimental young gentleman called Graham, who is not more interesting than half a dozen other members of the Greek Foreign Legion, that strange cosmopolitan combination, "all the flotsam and jetsam of humanity, the ragged edge of society, swept up by the broom of the war-god." The author, who seems to have been a member of the Legion, or to have accompanied it in the character of a war correspondent, possesses either a marvellously retentive memory or an extremely capacious notebook. Unfortunately he is not equally gifted with the power of selection, or even with ordinary good taste. In his painfully minute account of the sayings and doings of the Foreign Legionaries he spares us nothing. Their silly and objectionable nicknames, their vulgar witticisms—generally vapid and frequently coarse—their filthy practices and polyglot blasphemies, are all set down in the most merciless detail, so that the book is quite unfitted for any but the strongest stomachs. Possibly the example of Mr. Kipling has led Mr. Brailsford astray. Here, for example, is the advance of the red-fezzed Turkish host at Pharsala:

"'Hallo!' said Smith, 'that road wasn't red a minute ago.' It was as though a vein had been opened on the moor three miles away, and

the red blood trickled slowly down, a thin streak soaking its way through the yellow dust. The eyes of the company were fixed on the dry road, greedily watching the yellow absorbing the red. It had a fascination like nothing else on earth, this thin red symbol of terror that crept remorselessly over the sand.

'Well, I'm blowed if it ain't old Turco at last,' said the company. And then, with their vision sharpened, they saw black squares like burnt patches on the brown heath. They seemed stationary, but while someone found a new patch nearer and more menacing, the first would move a little. And still the red line trickled down the road. Then it was the horizon that grew black, and the outline of the hills seemed ragged, confessedly irregular as the black squares came over them.

'W'y, you'd think they was ants,' said Simson."

The noise of a shell is well described:

"Then came a strange grinding noise, as if the mills of the gods moved through the air. It seemed irritatingly slow, yet still it moved, and towards the company. There is no sound more angry or sinister, it is the rasping of iron on iron, the crunching of steel jaws, the inexorable approach of some engine of death along an iron track that strives to retard it. And at last it fell among the soft sand some twenty yards in front, the embodied noise visible at last. Smith looked back to the company. 'Pretty close shave that was, eh!' His face was flushed; he looked as if he would shout, 'Come on, you damned coward, nearer, nearer,' to the shell. 'That was shrapnel; you can tell him by the noise. If that boy had burst 'e'd 'ave maide a mess of some of us. Queer noise, ain't it, though?'

'It's like an over-ead cash railway in a draiper's shop,' said Simson."

These extracts will give some idea of Mr. Brailsford's strength as well as his weakness. Some day he ought to write a really good story, but he must first acquire the virtues of compression and selection.

\* \* \* \* \*

*God's Foundling.* By A. J. Dawson.  
(Heinemann.)

THIS is a somewhat difficult book to criticise, for it is a curious mixture of good and bad work. Mr. Dawson can write well enough, but he does not do so with any regularity, preferring a preciosity of phrase and extravagance of metaphor which land him in the ludicrous. This is the sort of thing:

"But where this hat's brim's little shadow fell across either side of Mr. Morley Fenton's forehead, thin, knotted, pale veins were throbbing and writhing, like baby snakes in the sun-warmed hollow of a fallen tree."

And the women in the book are very poor—dolls all of them, though of slightly different patterns and stuffing. One feels that the author cared very little about them, felt them a necessary nuisance in his story. He might, indeed, perfectly well have left them out; the respectable ones, at any rate. Nor are we much impressed by Mr. Leo Tarne, an epigrammatic Bohemian, without the courage of his convictions. He is supposed to be a sort of mentor of evil to the hero, and he rather bores us. He talks like this:

"She is not Greek. She is Byzantine, and ravishing. She is less beautiful than charming, less charming than adorable, less adorable than fascinating. She is simply the Carissima—an incarnate temptation, a sin set to the music of a can-can movement. She is Paradise and the other place, Paris, Florence, Monte Carlo, Naples, Brussels, and the Orient, condensed into five feet of femininity; the seven deadly sins and all the cardinal virtues, with others; the voice of an angel, the only real purple head of hair in the universe, and a lisp with which she might govern Europe—all that, and more, set in a bewildering maze of frou-frou, and christened Lisé Vecchi for lack of a name. But come, let us find this telegraph-place, for the Carissima is a creature who makes countless engagements, and affects a method in the order in which she breaks them."

On the other hand, the three principal characters—Morley Fenton, the precise man of business with a load on his conscience; George Barnard, the big honest child-like Bohemian; and Harold Foster, the "foundling," who is really Fenton's illegitimate son—are strongly drawn and well contrasted. And there is a moral idea in the book, the purification of the hereditary taint upon Harold's soul in the furnace of life, and his final emergence as what Mr. Dawson calls a "clean" man, ready for the service of his fellows. Possibly the gospel of "wild oats" is a fallacious one—we are not concerned with that—but, at any rate, it finds in *God's Foundling* effective pleading. That Harold Foster should ultimately marry one of the dolls is, we suppose, a concession to sentimentality. Mr. Dawson would do better if he had some humour.



## SOME APHORISMS.

## VI.—LA BRUYÈRE.

"As a moralist he is sagacious rather than profound—a man of the world who gives us the fruits of his experience of life, rather than a philosopher who records the results of his researches." Thus Mr. Henry Attwell introduces La Bruyère to readers of his new and dainty volume of selections from the French *pensée* writers, entitled *Pensées from French Gardens*. Mr. Attwell allots more space to La Bruyère than even to Rochefoucauld, and we take the liberty of transcribing some of his renderings of La Bruyère's shorter sayings:—

Everything has been said; and one comes too late after there have been men, and thinking men, on the earth for more than seven thousand years. As to the conduct of life, the choicest and best that could be written has been forestalled. One does but glean after the ancients, and after the able men among the moderns.

There are certain things which are intolerable when second-rate: poetry, music, painting, and public speaking.

The pleasure of criticism deprives us of the delight of being greatly moved by very beautiful things.

Many people possess nothing worthy of mention but their name. When you look at them closely they are the merest nobodies. Seen from a distance they are imposing.

We should try to make ourselves very deserving of some sort of employment. The rest is no concern of ours. It is the business of other people.

If it is a common thing to be struck by what is rare, how is it that we are so little affected by virtue?

Love begins with love; and there is no passing from firm friendship to even feeble love.

Love which grows by degrees is too much like friendship to become a violent passion.

It is a weakness to love. It is often another weakness to cure one's-self of the passion.

If a very plain woman begets love, such love is ardent; for it arises either from a strange weakness on the part of her lover, or from charms that are more powerful than those of beauty.

How difficult it is to be satisfied with anybody!

Observe carefully those who can never see anything worth praising in others, who are always finding fault, and whom no one can please, and you will find that they are persons who are liked by nobody.

Of all the ways of making a fortune, the shortest and best is to let people see clearly that it is to their interest to be of service to you.

There are two methods, and two methods only, of making one's way in the world—by one's own industry, or by profiting by the stupidity of other people.

Self-assertion is not so much a matter of will as natural disposition. It is a fault, but an innate fault. A naturally modest man does not easily become the reverse. It is of no avail to say to him, "Carry your head high and you will make your way." If he acted the part badly, it would do him more harm than good. What is wanted to secure success at court is genuine, frank impudence.

One need have achieved less to suggest the question: "Why did you get that appointment?" than, "Why did you not get it?"

It is boorish to give with a bad grace. If the act of giving entails an effort, what matters the additional cost of a smile?

We dread an old age to which we are by no means sure we shall ever attain.

Nothing cheers a man's heart more than to know that he has had the sense to avoid committing some foolish act.

There is in some men a certain mediocrity of intellect which helps to make them discreet.

## MR. MEREDITH AND FAME.

## IN PRAISE OF SHAGPAT.

THE gentle and genial writer of "The Looker-on," in *Blackwood's Magazine*, makes the following suggestive remarks *apropos* the seventieth birthday of Mr. George Meredith:—"I remember no time when he was not famous; not, indeed, as Miss Corelli is, but in a much wider world than is meant when we speak of 'literary society.' Quite as long ago as then his name was the name of a true man of genius who had well and comfortably made his proofs. We cannot have it, and it must not be allowed, that he was 'discovered' in 1885 by the ladies and gentlemen who stumbled on *Diana of the Crossways* at the circulating libraries. Is Fitzgerald renowned or not—he whose transmutation of Omar's quills of precious gold dust into a fine cup was thrown into the 'All at 4d.' box? Renowned he is, and firm on the after-death foundation of fame. But there is not much call for his book at the circulating libraries.

Yet those authors are not to be believed who declare themselves—I mean poets, novelists, essayists—indifferent to popular favour. It would be unkind to believe them; for being versed in the secrets of the heart, they must know that the sentiment they vaunt is so far from being noble as to be more or less inhuman. For one thing, real indifference would signify contentment that the mass of our fellow-creatures are too stupid and soulless to know what is good for them. Meredith has far too much warmth, is far too sympathetic, to have ever been indifferent to the lack of wide appreciation, though the best was never wanting; wherefore I bid you believe that, going cheerily and unswervingly upon his lofty path, it was with no Timon-of-Athens scowl, but with a glad flinging out of the arms, that he found general popularity awaiting him at the Crossways.

But why there, and not at an earlier stage, will never be known in this world. It is a fine story, *Diana of the Crossways*, but no greater in any respect than others its predecessors. A rush to the libraries for *The Egoist*—that supremely excellent display of Meredithian penetration and humour—was not to be expected. But the splendid romance and the glowing presentation of character in *Harry Richmond*—why with that before them in 1871 did the general public remain unaware of a great novelist and brilliant man of genius till 'Diana' appeared fourteen years afterward?

The general public. Yes; but it is certain that every professed Meredithian, even among the devout, is clear of reproach at this day? In the year 1898, being the thirteenth after the publication of 'Diana,' is there no dulness of apprehension even among these? If not, how comes it that we hear so little of *The Shaving of Shagpat*? The publisher will say that *The Shaving of Shagpat* sells, no doubt; but there is nothing in that unless he can disprove that the circulation of the book is mainly among members of the profession to whom its title appeals as a trade manual, or else as an amusing brochure particularly interesting to barbers. If the infrequent reprints of the story of Shibli Bagarag are not taken up in this way, where do the copies go to? Who else reads them? Wherever I hear Meredith praised I push inquiry into the merits of 'Shagpat,' and rarely find that anything is known about them. Some admirers of the author have but a faint recollection of this book; others frankly admit that they never came across it; some look as if they then heard its title for the first time, and doubt whether they heard aright. Scriptures on Meredith usually mention Shagpat, but only as a bibliographical item,—the first of our author's productions. The writer of a leading article in a great London newspaper—one of those that made obeisance and compliment to Meredith on his birthday—could praise the *Story of Chloë* above its author's opinion of that early work, but had not a word for *The Shaving of Shagpat* though he named it.

And all this while *The Shaving of Shagpat* invites curiosity by being quite unlike the Meredithian novels—a thing unique; and when explored, it is found to be a wonder of invention, imagination, fancy, wit. An Eastern tale in a string of stories, like to the *Thousand and One Nights' Entertainment*, it challenges comparison with a laughing audacity, and brings no shame on the challenger thereby: no, but glory and honour. Of the Meredithian obscurity and complication of phrase that some complain of, no trace here in a single line. Is there a Meredithian mannerism?—Not in *The Shaving of Shagpat*.

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## NOTES AND NEWS.

THE scheme, which was first mooted in the *Times* in November, 1896, for raising a subscription with which to defray the cost of obtaining a portrait of Mr. Herbert Spencer, has been successfully carried through. The portrait, painted to commemorate the completion of Mr. Spencer's *Synthetic Philosophy*, is the work of Prof. Hubert Herkomer, R.A., and is adjudged a good likeness. It will be sent to the Royal Academy this year, and then during Mr. Spencer's life-time will hang in the Tate Gallery; afterwards, with the approval of the trustees, finding its permanent home in the National Portrait Gallery. We trust that the final removal will be long deferred.

MR. CONRAD'S *Nigger of the "Narcissus"* is an exercise in impressionism so much in the class of *The Red Badge of Courage* that it is peculiarly interesting to read Mr. Stephen Crane's opinion of it. He writes: "It is unquestionably the best story of the sea written by a man now alive, and, as a matter of fact, one would have to make an extensive search among the tombs before he who has done better could be found. As for the ruck of writers who make the sea their literary domain, Conrad seems in effect simply to warn them off the premises, and tell them to remain silent. He comes nearer to an ownership of the mysterious life on the ocean than anybody who has written in this century."

MR. CONRAD'S book, by the way, is called in the American edition *The Children of the Sea, The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* having been considered too ungainly. A new work from his pen, consisting of short stories, is announced, under the title *Tales of Unrest*.

If M. Zola reads the *Daily Chronicle*, he must have been amused by a paragraph in Wednesday's issue. We are tempted to quote it: "Has Mr. George Moore lost his old admiration and affection for M. Zola? If not, why should a series of private letters from the latter to the former appear in the catalogue of a well-known Holborn bookselling firm? There are six of these, and they may all be had for the moderate sum of £4 3s. That this is dirt cheap is evident when we add that one of them refers 'to the English school of fiction and the success of M.' and another 'advises M. as to the best method of publishing a novel in Paris,' and positively 'invites him to take up in England the superb rôle of introducing to the English "la littérature vivante." How can Mr. Moore possibly have parted with such a flattering invitation?"

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Daily News* has been studying the two sermons delivered recently by Dean Farrar at Great St. Mary's, Cambridge, to some purpose. On subjecting them to analysis, he finds that the allusive and eloquent preacher used altogether more than eighty different quotations, and twenty-three Scriptural phrases or texts, exclusive of paraphrases. Thus: "Dean Farrar has four Greek quotations in the original—Pindar, 'the Greek comedian,' 'the Greek father,' and an unacknowledged passage; also two Greek words used by St. Luke, and Latin quotations in the original from 'the Roman poet,' 'the Roman bard,' 'the gay lyrist,' St. Augustine, St. Francis Xavier, and Orosius, to say nothing of the inscriptions on the dials of Balliol College and Lincoln's Inn, and such flowers of speech as 'summum bonum' and 'toto celo, toto inferno.' Some score of sentences, which may be prose or poetry, are found in the two sermons within quotation marks and without their source being stated. Dean Farrar quotes poetry without mentioning the author (Shakespeare, Tennyson, &c.) twelve times in all—the total amounting to forty-seven lines. He also quotes 'a late eminent judge,' 'the German writer,' 'a brutal onlooker,' and 'one of our greatest men of science.'"

In addition to the unacknowledged quotations, Dean Farrar mentioned by name the following authorities when making use of their words:

Christ (three passages).	Novalis.
David.	Schopenhauer.
Solomon.	Salvator Rosa.
St. Peter.	Henry Smith.
St. Paul.	William Brown (the boy martyr).
St. John.	Shakespeare (two passages acknowledged).
St. Luke.	Milton (four passages).
St. Augustine.	Browning (ditto).
St. Francis Xavier (two passages, Latin and English).	Byron (twice).
Marcus Aurelius.	Renan (twice).
"Cleantha."	Wordsworth.
Epictetus.	Lord Herbert of Cheshire.
Hermas.	Emerson.
Pindar.	Ruskin.
Pynho.	Thackeray.
Orosius.	Sir Fitzjames Stephen.
Leibnitz.	Von Hartmann.
Amiel (two passages).	

"After this it savours of anti-climax to add that the preacher also alluded by name, without quoting from, to the prophet Isaiah, Whitfield, Augustus Caesar, Trajan, St. Louis of France, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Thomas Aquinas, the author of the *Imitatio Christi*, Dives, Lazarus (the subject of miracle), 'the poor, ugly teacher whom the Greek Pharisees doomed to drink hemlock,' Mary (Queen), Othello, Desdemona, Cordelia, and Pan." The achievement is well worthy of record.

THE following lines are printed on the title-page of Mr. I. Zangwill's new volume, *Dreamers of the Ghetto*—"The story of a Dream that has not come true":

"MOSES AND JESUS.

In dream I saw two Jews that met by chance,  
One old, stern-eyed, deep-browed, yet garlanded  
With living light of love around his head,  
The other young, with sweet seraphic glance.  
Around went on the Town's Satanic dance,  
Hunger a-piping while at heart he bled.  
*Shalom Aleichem*, mournfully each said,  
Nor eyed the other straight but looked askance.  
Sudden from Church outrolled an organ hymn,  
From Synagogue a loudly chaunted air,  
Each with its Prophet's high acclaim instinct.  
Then for the first time met their eyes, swift linked  
In one strange, silent, piteous gaze, and dim  
With bitter tears of agonised despair."

THE most unaffectedly amusing guide-book we have ever seen is *Hind Head*, by Mr. Thomas Wright, of Olney. Mr. Wright entered with extraordinary zest into his task, and he describes not only the country, but the best-known inhabitants. More, he supplies a preface consisting of a short biography of himself by a friend, and there is his portrait by way of frontispiece. This is the very crown of thoroughness.

MR. WRIGHT'S first celebrity is Mr. Conan Doyle; and then we come to a chapter headed enigmatically and not very happily: "Mr. Grant Allen: The Devil's Jumps." At *Hind Head*, it seems, Mr. Grant Allen is spoken of "not merely with respect, but almost with affection. He is 'our Grant Allen.'" Moreover, "in relating an anecdote he is inimitable. In his lips venerable stories from the Talmud, or other archaic repositories, gather new charms and sparkle with unsuspected fun. Like FitzGerald's Omar, the rendering is better than the original. He can rarely resist administering a sly poke at the clergy." In all that he writes he dispenses "a dry humour recalling the flavour of Sir Walter Scott."

ANON Mr. Wright called on Mr. Le Gallienne, who is also a *Hind Head* celebrity, and spent an ambrosial evening. The poet was genial. "There was no attempt at pose (How one detests Goethe for his attitudes!), everything was pleasant, easy, and natural." Talk flowed like water. "I asked whether he did not rank Keats above Shelley. 'One must do so,' he replied; 'Shelley is more music than poetry.' . . . The conversation turned to Mr. Le Gallienne's new translation of Omar

Khayyam, and my poem 'Edward Fitzgerald at Bedford. . . . Some,' he remarked, 'have fallen foul of *The Quest*, but it contains nothing harmful. It is mere boyishness, and I am afraid,' he said, lighting a cigarette, 'I shall always be a boy.' At length Mr. Wright departed. "When he turned away I felt that we had done each other good. I knew that we had electrified each other. I felt drawn to him as I have felt drawn to very few. When I got back to Grayshott I took up *The Quest*, to finish it. . . . When I reached the last paragraph I could not restrain tears."

A LETTER of Carlyle's, hitherto unpublished, which has come into the market, contains the following pessimistic utterance on his calling: "Literature is like money, the appetite increases by gratification; the mines of literature, too, are unwholesome and dreary as the mines of Potosi; yet from either there is no return, and though little confident of finding contentment, happiness is too proud a term. I must work, I believe, in those damp caverns, till once the whole mind is recast, or the lamp of life has ceased to burn within it."

THE American Ambassador has recalled, in an interview in *Cassell's Magazine*, the Swinburnian stanza from which Bret Harte borrowed the metre of "The Heathen Chinese." It surges along thus gloriously:

"Who shall seek, who shall bring,  
And restore thee the day  
When the dove dipped her wing  
And the oars won their way,  
Where the narrowing Symplegades whiten  
The straits of Propontis with spray."

"The Heathen Chinese" is a precious gem of humour, but it is melancholy, none the less, to reflect that its success has probably made it impossible for any more serious verse to be written in the same irresistible measure.

AN extraordinary book lies before us. The title is *Tales from the New Testament*, and the author Mr. F. J. Gould, and it is an attempt to make the story of the Gospels more interesting to children by retelling them in colloquial English. Look at this passage from Mark vi., as improved by Mr. Gould:

"'I know what you will say,' Jesus went on. 'You will say, "Doctor, heal yourself." You will say that if I can cast out devils and cure sick folk in other places, I ought to be able to do it here among my own family and my old neighbours. But you know a prophet very often gets no notice taken of him by the people of his own village or country, and so he can do no mighty works among such unbelievers. You don't believe in me, and I can't perform cures for you. In olden days there was a famine in this land, and the prophet Elijah went to live with a widow, and all the time she sheltered him in her cottage heaven blessed her with plenty of food; but she was not a Jewess, there were no Jewesses good enough to have so much done for them. Then, again, there were many lepers in this country in the days of the prophet Elisha, but he never healed any of the Jews; they did not deserve it; he only healed a foreigner from the land of Syria. And so to-day I cannot come here to—'

A loud shout of anger stopped the speaker.

'You are insulting us!'  
'Who are you to talk like this to respectable people?'  
'Kick the scoundrel out of the synagogue!'  
'Hang him on the nearest tree!'  
'Pitch him over the cliff!'

Clambering across the benches, the men of Nazareth rushed at the Carpenter, and dragged him out of the meeting-house."

Is it not hideous? One has almost a sense of impropriety in looking at it.

THE same or another Mr. Gould has had "chats" with eighteen "Pioneers of Modern Thought," which "chats" he has now put together in a volume. We cannot help admiring the ingenious way in which Mr. Gould has found complimentary adjectives for the eighteen. Thus his preface: "I wish I could chat all the chats again with witty Momerie, brilliant Crozier, silver-penned Mrs. Lynn Linton, grand old Chartist Harney, thoughtful Miss Plumtre, strenuous George Jacob Holyoake, brave-spoken Foote, gentle Miss Mathilde Blind, liberal Picton, scholarly Wheeler, independent Voysey, eloquent Coit, anecdotal Conway, philosophical Coupland, charmingly metaphysical Mrs. Husband, idealistic Muirhead, studious Whittaker, and encyclopædic Robertson."

THE *Idler*, under its new control, is a shade less comic and more actual and literary than it was. But there has not been time for a revised policy to take full effect. Among the March articles is one that relates the story of the *Germ*, the Pre-Raphaelite magazine, another on Great Britain as a Military Power, a third on English Cricketers in Australia, and a fourth on Doré in England. The pictures are fair, although they cannot compare with those offered by American magazines. It is increasingly strange that the Atlantic should make such a difference.

A FORTNIGHT ago the *Outlook* propounded to its readers the following literary enigma: "Who Wrote this Sonnet? It lies before us on a large quarto half-sheet, dulled, apparently, by time, and in form the page—evidently a proof—distinctly copies the sumptuous edition, in two volumes, quarto, of Gay's *Poems*, issued by subscription about the first quarter of the eighteenth century:

"We found Him first as in the Dells of May  
The Dreaming Damsel finds the earliest  
Flower:  
Thoughtless we wandered in the Evening  
Hour:  
Aimless and pleased we went our Random  
Way:  
In the foot-haunted City, in the Night,  
Among the alternate Lamps we went and  
came  
Till, like a humorous Thunderbolt, that  
Name,  
The hated Name of BRASH, assailed our Sight.  
We faw, we paused, we entered, seeking Gin.  
His Wrath, like a huge Breaker on the  
Beach,  
Broke infant forth. He on the Counter  
beat  
In his infantile Fury; and his Feet  
Danced Impotent Wrath upon the Floor  
within.  
Still as we fled we heard his Idiot Screech."

LAST week's *Outlook* contained the answer, which was astutely and correctly given by Miss Edith Palliser, the Secretary of the Central Society for Women's Suffrage. The answer is—Robert Louis Stevenson. As to the how and why of his writing it the *Outlook* says: "Thereby hangs a tale, and if we can prevail upon our contributor, 'C. B.' [the propounder of the "enigma"] to unfold it, next week or the week following, a not unamusing record of Stevensonian 'High Jinks' in the early seventies may be unrolled."

MEANWHILE, the *Outlook* is embarking on a reckless series of enigmas. Pleased by the notice taken of the circular red badge it wears on its cover, our contemporary asks its readers to guess "what it is, and why chosen." Our own guess is, that it was taken from a lady's brooch, possibly one belonging to the wife of a distinguished critic.

A WRITER in the *Scots Pictorial* says: "It is not easy to write about Mr. Andrew Lang"; he then writes four columns about him, saving four inches allotted to Mr. Lang's portrait. The article is gossippy, almost audacious; but in the following passage Mr. Lang's literary characteristics are felicitously touched:

"His quality is the most delicate, intangible thing in the world. As some one has put it, he has the art of giving in a single, sure, deft, apparently careless touch, the feeling of many things widely separate: of men's dreams in olden time and men's thoughts to-day; of ancient tale and the gentle modern derision of it, with the delight in 'Elsevirs,' the love of all quaint relics, and that passion for Nature and the outdoor life which often exists apart from these other likings. The literary effect is a thing by itself, a thing which cannot be described. Mr. Lang has been compared to the *jongleur*, who, in the castles of old, used to make the days so bright for rusty barons and fair wearied ladies that time was measured by his visits. The comparison is not unfit. Gay, intimate, softly fascinating, our 'worthy' would have been a very king of the wandering clan, singing now of a Court of Love, now of Palestine, with a strange, far-away grace, while his eyes looked askance, dreaming of old gods, old mysteries, and the riddle of existence. Something more than a *jongleur* he undoubtedly is, but that first and that last, with store of learning ever ready to the touch of the angling fancy."

A WRITER in the *Westminster Review* surveys the "Dog in Literature." The article will interest dog-lovers, who, however, are reminded that, with one immortal exception, Homer used the dog as a type of shamelessness, and that in the Bible the dog is mentioned only with disgust. The writer might have added that Shakespeare scarcely acknowledges intimate friendship between dog and man. More often than not his references to dogs are uncomplimentary. Theseus' and Hippolyta's praise of the hounds of Sparta is splendid, but it is not the language of an intimate love. And the lord and huntsman in "The Taming of the Shrew" who discourse so well about Clowder and Silver and Belman love their dogs as huntsmen rather than as men. Oddly enough, the



writer, Mr. J. Hudson, entirely omits to mention Launce and his dog, in "The Two Gentlemen of Verona." Yet in Launce's complaints and upbraiding of his "cruel-hearted cur," who has "no more pity in him than a dog," there is an ironical suggestion of real dog and man attachment.

AMONG Mr. Hudson's less familiar doggy selections is Sir Edwin Arnold's rendering of an Eastern legend, in which an adulteress who is being led out to be stoned is saved through a dog. On the way she sees the dog lying in the sun half dead with thirst, and she tenders the poor animal her shoe full of water:

"But the King,  
Riding within his litter, marked this thing:  
'The law is that the people stone thee dead  
For that which thou hast wrought; but there  
is come  
Fawning around thy feet a witness dumb,  
Not heard upon thy trial.

I hold rule  
In Allah's stead, who is "the merciful,"  
And hope for mercy; therefore, go thou free—  
I dare not show less pity unto thee!"

A LECTURER at Highgate has been explaining, for the benefit of literary pilgrims, the means by which they may identify the position of Andrew Marvell's cottage on Highgate Hill. It stood, he said, next door to Lauderdale House, where Nell Gwynne once lived, and, when Sir Sydney Waterlow razed it to the ground, he, the lecturer, asked to be allowed to place a stone on the site. Sir Sydney said that in all probability the whole of the land would soon be built on and such a mark would therefore be hidden. He, however, consented to place the stone from the cottage doorstep in the wall adjoining Highgate Hill, exactly opposite the former entrance to the cottage, and to this day the stone remains as the only reminder that the famous writer and politician once lived at Highgate.

MR. JOHN LANE's remarkable gift for endowing a book with a dainty and alluring shape and form is again displayed in the little volume on *Journalism for Women*, by Mr. E. A. Bennett, which has just reached us. The cover is bright and charming. A scarlet-clad dame, presumably a woman journalist, points to an upward path winding through a green landscape. The design is bold and quite successful, and it strikes the keynote of a pleasant and practical work. It were well if more publishers realised the relationship that should exist between the outside and inside of a book.

UNDER the title, "The Epic of Ladies," a Cambridge poet, who hides his identity, in the *Granta*, under the simple letter "K," very dexterously chaffs Mr. Samuel Butler's theory that the *Odyssey* was written by a woman. Thus:

"An axiom, so safe and sure  
That everyone may know it, is  
The simple fact, no more obscure,  
That Homer was a poetess;  
The marks of female style we meet  
In every single line of his,  
Apparent in those dainty feet  
And harmonies divine of his.

Nay, if a man in Homer's lore  
Is reckoned very well up, he  
Ascribes the cantos twenty-four  
Undoubting, to Penelope,  
And thus, though long in darkness sealed,  
Appears the whole reality;  
The secret is at length revealed  
Of Homer's personality.

Thus all those wondrous wanderings  
And perils of Ulysses's  
Turn out to be imaginings  
(Embroidered) of his missis's;  
And long ere woman learned to ride  
Like Shorland or like Michael,  
A harder wheel she knew to guide,  
The ancient *Epic Cycle*."

A CORRESPONDENT writes:

"In the recently published work, *Annals of a Publishing House*; William Blackwood and his Sons, their Magazine and Friends, by the late Mrs. Oliphant, the authoress says of the *Scots Magazine*, referring to the events of the year 1817, 'Constable's small magazine, which they (Pringle & Cleghorn) managed for a short time, soon went the way of all 'dull periodicals.' For a 'dull' periodical, none has been more quoted from except its English contemporary, the *Gentleman's Magazine*; but regarding its discontinuance, which did not happen till 1826, all bibliographers appear to be at fault. Lowndes says of the *Scots Magazine* and the *Edinburgh Magazine and Literary Miscellany*, 'This and the preceding periodical were driven out of the field soon after the appearance of *Blackwood's Magazine*.' The facts are, that the *Miscellany* was purchased by Constable and incorporated with his *Scots Magazine*, and its title added in 1803; and the *Scots Magazine* was purchased from Alexander Cowan, the trustee on Constable's estate, on July 12, 1826, by William Blackwood, although, strange to say, he did not incorporate the ancient magazine with his own and younger periodical, *Blackwood's Magazine*, the usual practice of a publisher under similar circumstances. The latter fact, discovered by Mr. G. W. Niven some time ago, was communicated to the pages of the *Scots Magazine* (Cowan & Co., Perth) in February, 1896, in an article entitled 'The Scots Magazine, 1739-1826,' but evidently Mrs. Oliphant did not avail herself of the information there given. The evidence of the sale of the copyright is contained in the following advertisement, which appeared in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* of July 27, 1826, a file of which for that year may be consulted in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow. It is as follows: 'Edinburgh Magazine: A new series of the Scots Magazine. The Trustee upon the Sequestered Estate of Messrs. Archibald Constable & Co. begs to inform the subscribers to the above Work that the Publication of it is now discontinued, the copyright having been purchased by Mr. Blackwood. Edinburgh, 12th July, 1826.' As Mrs. Oliphant's work purports to give an authoritative history of *Blackwood's Magazine*, it is natural to expect the fact to which attention is now called should have received mention, but, as already stated, the authoress—like the bibliographers—appears to have been unacquainted with the transaction."

MR. GEORGE REDWAY writes: "I shall feel much obliged if you will make known to your readers that I have decided to print a special presentation edition of R. Farquharson Sharp's *Dictionary of English Authors*, recently published, in order that *bona-fide* booksellers may obtain a copy for their personal use without expense. Country booksellers applying for a copy should state conveyance, and the book will be delivered free into the hands of their London agent.

Town booksellers may receive the book through their collectors; but immediate application in writing is necessary, as the number printed will, of course, depend on the extent to which this offer is accepted."

THE little volume, entitled *Formby Reminiscences*, which was originally printed for private circulation only, has met with so great a demand that it has been decided to reprint an edition for general sale. This will be published by Messrs. Wells Gardner, Darton & Co. during the course of the present month. The author, Mrs. Jacson, is a grand-niece of the first Sir Robert Peel.

THE Religious Tract Society, which will be 100 years old in May, 1899, proposes to inaugurate its Centenary Celebration on Tuesday, the 22nd of the present month. At three o'clock p.m. on that day a meeting will be held in the Mansion House, at which the Lord Mayor will preside, and the claims of the Society will be advocated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Earl of Meath, the Bishop of London, and others. At seven p.m., on the same day, another meeting will be held in the Queen's Hall, Langham-place. To meet the vastly increased claims on the Society, which assists publication work in 226 languages, it is proposed to raise a special Centenary Fund, as a fitting commemoration of the hundredth year of the Society's existence.

M. EDOUARD ROD will give a lecture at Stafford House, St. James's, on Wednesday, March 23, at a quarter to four p.m., on "Le Roman Français Contemporain." The chair will be taken by the Marquess of Dufferin and Ava. Tickets can be obtained from Mlle. Souvestre, 42, Onslow-gardens, S.W., or Mrs. Augustine Birrell, 30, Lower Sloane-street, S.W.

M. BOUTET DE MONVEL is to be followed to America by M. Carolus Duran, who also has commissions to paint portraits there. These visits should be very profitable. English artists must regret that American taste in pictures is so inveterately French.

MESSRS. WILLIAM ANDREWS & Co. are about to issue *A Book About Bells*, by the Rev. G. S. Tyack, author of *The Historic Dress of the Clergy*, &c. It will be fully illustrated.

MR. JOSEPH HATTON's new novel will be published this month by Messrs. Hutchinson, who have lately issued the fifth edition of the same author's *The Dagger and the Cross*. The new story will be called *The Vicar*, and will be a story of the day, the scenes alternating between London and a Worcester village.

THE next number, the last but one, of Mr. W. Rothenstein's series of *English Portraits*, will be published immediately. It will contain drawings of Sir Henry Irving and Mr. George Gissing.

## HAMLET AND "WE BERLINERS."

I CANNOT congratulate the friends of Shakespeare in Germany upon their treatment of the Lyceum Company which visited Berlin this month. "Hamlet" was played in the New Royal Theatre, with Mr. Forbes Robertson in the title-rôle, and Mrs. Patrick Campbell as Ophelia; and on the morrow of the performance the whole Berlin Press, with but one or two honourable exceptions, damned Mr. Robertson with the faint praise that he was interesting, but not convincing. I am not qualified to defend the actor's merits against the strictures of expert critics. As a mere layman in the stalls, I am glad to put on record that his wonderful gift of elocution revealed to me fresh beauties in Shakespeare's text. In the rebuke, for instance, which Hamlet addresses to Horatio against the things "dreamt of in your philosophy," I had hitherto always heard the emphasis put upon the pronoun. Mr. Robertson, however, laid the stress on "philosophy," which is obviously right. It refers back to the Prince's resolve to "wipe away . . . all saws of books, all forms, all pressures past," and it removes the touch of assumption which makes the couplet so serviceable to quote. In the great soliloquy, again, in the third act, I fancy that, if this were the time and place, I could prove Mr. Robertson's delivery to be nearer to Shakespeare's intention than that of Herr Josef Kainz in the Deutscher Theater in Berlin. Where the latter is turbulent and aggressive, with the audience obviously in his eye, Mr. Robertson simply let us overhear him as his meditation slowly grew to shape. Yet more, in the play-acting scene, where an English actor cannot but study the effect of Macbeth's picture in the National Gallery, Herr Kainz' vehemence is a serious error in my sight. Shakespeare never meant Hamlet to be fidgety, but the fleeting emotions of the Prince's spirit were faithfully reflected on Mr. Robertson's mobile features.

But my quarrel with the Berlin public goes deeper than this. It was unmannerly that the Teuton neighbour on my right rose and went out in the middle of the play with a "this will never do" upon his lips. It was distracting that my left-hand neighbour should have been cutting the leaves of his German text while the play was in progress. Such lapses from good taste can be forgiven; but what I find harder to forgive is the totally perverse point of view from which the critics approached the occasion. It is far from my purpose to belittle what I only very imperfectly understand. Shakespeare's debt to Germany cannot be estimated too high. In a sense he was discovered by the German commentators, as he was certainly adopted for their own. Private rights of ownership in this priceless property it would be idle to maintain and futile to grudge. Carlyle's fine dictum settled the matter long since: "We are all poets when we read a poem well." Such recreation, however, is possible to the tyro in Shakespearean lore. The problem of the quartos, the mystery of the lost Hamlet, the research into the Prince's age, these matters are not

essential to an intelligent enjoyment of the play. It is as well, by the way, that this should be so, for the scholars are as hopelessly divided as ever. Prof. Dr. Döring, of Berlin, for instance, in his *Neuer Versuch zur ästhetischen Erklärung der Tragödie* (Gaertner, 1898), identifies the Hamlet of the first recension with the W. H. of the earlier sonnets, and refers them both to William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke. But now Mr. Sidney Lee has proved that Thorpe would never have addressed my lord of Pembroke without the titles of his rank. And if W. H. is not Lord Pembroke, what becomes of Dr. Döring's whole contention: "Lösung Hamlets von Pembroke ist das Wort des Rätsels"?

What should have become of all the dust which the scholars have raised about our ears, as we listened to Mr. Forbes Robertson as Hamlet? The great building of Kroll's Theatre in Berlin was filled in all places which command a view of the stage. A princess was in the boxes and an ambassador in the stalls. The British residents in Berlin had assembled to do honour to their countrymen; but the bulk of the house—as a tailor's apprentice could have proved—was composed of Germans. Forty years, save one, had passed since Shakespeare's German friends had entertained him in his native guise. To many who had grown up under this disability, it came as a veritable surprise that Shakespeare was an English poet. Here then, I thought, was the opportunity for which this city in the plain had been waiting for more than a generation. Now was the time to correct the foreign conventions, to supplement Schlegel and shake off the commentators' yoke, to learn to know Shakespeare as his own people know and love him. And yet, what was the result? Most of them would not realise that they had suffered a disability at all. They failed even to appreciate its removal, and turned the tables on their benefactors, crying out for the forty years in the desert. With the almost unique exception of the able critic of the *Vossische Zeitung*—*honoris causa nomino*—one after one they rejected the brilliant lesson which had been taught them. One after one they turned away from an Englishman's rendering of an Englishman's play for the simple reason that it was English. This fault was more than the common prejudice—less common by far in Germany than among ourselves—against everything foreign. It was genuine jealousy for Shakespeare's fame, a genuine and seemingly ineradicable belief that Schlegel's text and Josef Kainz' personation are truer and nearer to the Shakespearean Hamlet than the *ipsissima verba* in Mr. Forbes Robertson's mouth. One critic wrote that "the just demands which we Berliners make of the actor of Hamlet were by no means satisfied," and another appeared to formulate those demands by saying "Hamlet" in Germany is almost better known than 'Faust'; the man of culture can repeat whole passages by heart; the 'Hamlet' problem is always with us, and the performances of the best interpreters are familiar to the smallest detail." A third critic wrote more bluntly: "It touches us Germans to the quick to see

Shakespeare, who has become almost more one of ourselves than even our own poets, put on the boards in a foreign dress. This applies above all to "Hamlet," whose turns of expression have gone straight into the German treasury. The sense of foreignness which an English Hamlet creates is increased by the peculiar style in which, as we saw last night, the dramatic art of England moves. England is the land of tradition—even in art." Oh, ye Germans and Berliners, confounding thus blindly the spheres of native and foreign, what style and tradition should the English stage conserve but those of Shakespeare, the Englishman? My goosequill would fain borrow a feather from Matthew Arnold's pen to deal adequately with the last of these citations. For while I am angrily casting about how to turn "smug" and "priggish" more courteously, the lightning of his irony would have played upon your pretensions, would have stripped your self-assertiveness bare, would have probed your feelings, thus touched to the quick by the sound of Shakespeare in his mother-tongue, would have pressed the point home again and again with a grim facility of a master-hand until you cried out for mercy. What is the value of this Philistine convention that Hamlet is more German than English? What are the counterfeits in the "German treasury" to the jewels from Shakespeare's lips? What is the gain of your "men of culture" above ours that you should be so hyper-sensitive to disillusion? I do not question the excellence of Schlegel's rendering. It almost ranks with the English Bible among the masterpieces of the translator's art. But there is nothing in it from a literary point of view which can justify this talk about demands.

Appropriately enough, the fourth volume of the re-issue of Schlegel and Tieck's *Shakespeare*, which Prof. Brandt is editing for the Bibliographical Institute in Leipzig, was published at the same time as the English company visited Berlin. It contains three plays, "Romeo and Juliet," "Hamlet," and "Othello," to each of which Dr. Brandt has supplied a brief introduction and notes. I have read once more their "Hamlet" in this "treasury" side by side with the *Temple* volume, and, admirable as it undoubtedly is, if it spoils them for the English version, then they have no ear for language. To the lovers of Shakespeare I need hardly apologise for selecting one passage in illustration. Ophelia's speech, when Hamlet leaves her, in act iii., sc. i., runs in German as follows:

"O welch ein edler Geist ist hier zerstört!  
Des Hofmann's Auge, des Gelehrten Zunge,  
Des Krieger's Arm, des Staates Blum' und  
Hoffnung,  
Der Sitte Spiegel und der Bildung Muster,  
Das Merkziel der Betrachter: ganz, ganz hin!  
Und ich, der Frau'n elendeste und ärmste,  
Die seiner Schwüre Honig sog, ich sehe  
Die edle, hochgebietende Vernunft  
Mistönend wie verstimmte Glocken jetzt;  
Dies hohe Bild, die Züge blüh'nder Jugend,  
Durch Schwärmerei zerrüttet: weh' mir, wehe,  
Dass ich sah, was ich sah, und sehe, was ich  
sehe."

As a whole and in detail it is demonstrably inferior to the original. Without being



hypercritical, where, we may ask, is "the observed of all observers" in "das Merkziel der Betrachter"? How does "die seiner Schwüre Honig sog" reproduce the magic of the line "That suck'd the honey of his music vows"? or "mistönend wie verstimmte Glocken jetzt" express "Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh"? Where are the rhythm and alliteration and suggestion of

"That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth  
Blasted with ecstasy,"

in the translator's conventional rendering? How different, even, are the associations of "Schwärmerei" from the Shakespearean "ecstasy." Has Germany missed nothing of beauty by accepting the substitute for so long, and was it a tenable attitude, when Mrs. Patrick Campbell made Shakespeare's music more melodious, to pretend that they preferred their own:

"When they wiped their mouths and went their journey,  
Throwing him for thanks—'But drought was pleasant'?"

There was, as I have said, one exception to this wilful blindness of the German critics. One writer had the grace and wit to see that the rare visit of the Lyceum company to Berlin should be used to rectify the Berlin standard. I conclude this protest by quoting the following sentences from the evening edition of the *Vossische Zeitung*. It is not too late to hope that their candour and courage will win their due effect:

"Mr. Robertson's artistic wisdom," wrote the critic, "prompted him to lay every stress upon the brimming life of the soul. Hamlet moved his fellows like a kind of sleep-walker, soft of speech and gesture, good-hearted, gentle-minded, but with something strange upon him. When they addressed him, he turned silent, and looked doubtfully at them, like strangers alien to his kind. He listened less to their words than to his own inward voice. But when he was alone, then Hamlet came to life indeed. Then, in self-communing, his sensitive spirit woke up, and in tones of thunder he spoke to his second self, as though another man were present before him in the flesh. This visionary, keen-sighted, transcendental trait in Hamlet, which I never saw worked out before, was admirably suited to Mr. Robertson. There we had England itself, the land of mists and ghosts, and then we realised that Shakespeare's ghosts were something more than superstition. . . . Next to this slender, tender Hamlet, a tender, slender Ophelia—mimosa next to mimosa. I gained the impression that Mrs. Patrick Campbell's performance was not adequately appreciated by our German public, perhaps because they looked for a more conventional attractiveness, and, therefore, were correspondingly disappointed. The more emphatically should it be stated that this Ophelia was fully worthy of this Hamlet. She, too, was thoroughly English, with nothing of that Goethe's girlishness, ripe, sweet and sensuous, which our crass German interpreters have gradually evolved into an ideal of sinful love, the precise Antipodes of the true Ophelia. Mrs. Patrick Campbell gave us the real Ophelia of Shakespeare, a maiden shy, pensive, impressionable, all sweet yielding and timid innocence. Her commonest phrase was: 'I will obey'; her quickest instinct was fear. She was like a dove

fluttering in the storm, and falling broken to the ground. . . .

"Ophelia and Hamlet, as rendered to us by Mrs. Campbell and Mr. Robertson, were the fore-runners of a cleaner morality and a tenderer imagination, born too soon into a world too harsh for them, 'aristocrats of nervous sensibility,' as the modern catch-word terms it, who owed their misfortunes to their too early birth."

L. M.

#### MR. MEREDITH'S ODE.

I HAVE read Mr. Meredith's Ode in the current *Cosmopolis* with an amazement passing words. Amazement for its power, amazement for its sins, its flagranties, its defiant pitching to the devil of all law recognised even by the boldest, the most scornful of merely conventional tradition; amazement—for it fulfils its title, it is itself an anarchy, a turbulence, tumultuously eruptive as the Revolution in its first unchaining. To say it is not a perfect poem would be mild. It challenges all order; it has every fault within a poet's compass, except the tame faults, except lack of inspiration. On the plenitude, the undeniable plenitude, of its aggressive force, it seems to stake everything. No one can complain that Mr. Meredith fears his fate too much. I am in tune with most audacity, but Mr. Meredith leaves me gasping.

You must read the poem once, as you play a difficult fantasia once, merely to see how it goes; a second time, to begin to read it; a third time, to begin to realise it. All the arduous power and all the more repellent vices of Mr. Meredith's poetic style are here at grips, exalted by mutual antiposition and counteraction. Never has he been more intermittently careless of grammatical construction, obscuring what is already inherently difficult. He storms onward like his own France, crashing and contorting in his path the astonishing sentences, now volcanic and irresistibly thundering, now twisted and writhing or furiously splintered. The metre is likewise; lines blocked, immobile, inflexible, with needless rubble of words, or whirling all ways like snapped and disintegrated machinery; yet at times forcing their way to rightness through sheer inward heat, and leaping like a geyser-spout—magnificently impressive.

For the Ode is wonderful, though an unlawful wonder. The first nine stanzas, with all their perverse difficulties and disfeatures, are full of astonishing imagery, passages like the loosing of pent fires. The poem has a devil in it. By no other word can we describe the magnetic intensity of its repellentness and arrestingness. Those who overcome their first recoil must end in submission—if protesting submission—to its potency. No youth could rival the nether furnaces of this production of age, no young imagination conceive these images which outpour by troops and battalions. Mr. Meredith's own language can alone figure the poem:

"Ravishing as red wine in woman's form,  
A splendid Maenad, she of the delirious laugh,  
Her body twisted flames with the smoke-cap crowned,

. . . . who sang, who sang  
Intoxication to her swarm,  
Revolved them, hair, voice, feet, in her  
carmagnole."

That splendid outburst is all for which I have room. If this Ode be not a success (as I wish I might persuade myself it is), more power has gone to such a failure than would make a score of reputations. And assuredly much, very much, it were blind to call anything but success.

FRANCIS THOMPSON.

#### WHAT THE PEOPLE READ.

##### XI.—A WIFE.

"THERE's another!" she exclaimed, as she threw down the book. "Three books from Mudie's this morning, and not a single one I want to read."

"What book is that?" I asked.

"*The Disaster*," she said.

"It has been well reviewed," I remarked.

"One notice said it was better than Zola and better than Stephen Crane," she said, "and so I ordered it. But it's a translation; and I hate translations; they never seem real. And it's all about the French—and years ago. I'm sure I don't care what French people were doing when I was in my cradle."

"Well, what are the others?"

She picked them up and read the titles from their backs.

"*Simon Dale and Shrewsbury*."

"By very capable authors," I said.

"Yes, but why does Anthony Hope want to write about people he can't know anything about—and I don't care anything about?"

"The historical novel," I said, "if well done, gives you a sort of insight into a period which—"

"Pouf!" she said. "Do you suppose I read novels to get insights into periods?"

"You read them to be amused, no doubt," I said. "But isn't it possible to combine amusement with—"

"No," she interrupted. "When I am instructed I am not amused. Besides, one isn't instructed. When I read a historical novel I know all the time that the people aren't real people; and even if they were, they're dead. And I really don't care much about people who have been dead for hundreds of years."

"Then do you like novels about the future—*Looking Backwards*, or *The Time Machine*?"

She pondered a moment, wrinkling her brows. "Well, I can't say that I exactly like them," she said; "but one has to read them, because everyone talks about them. But how can you be really interested in people who never existed—people you can never possibly meet?"

"Then the novel you want is a novel dealing with people of the present time? The Society novel?"

"Oh, no! Not the Society novel. The people are less real than—than the Martians. Now, let me see—I think, if I could order a novel, I would get Mr. Hope, or Mr. Wells, or Mr. Frankfort Moore, to sit down

and write a story about the people he knows, the sort of people one meets every day, only—you know—put into strange situations. They can do it, I'm sure. Look at *I Forbid the Banns*, and *The God in the Car*. Mr. Frankfort Moore wrote one of them, didn't he? And yet he will write stories about stupid people in the last century."

"Then you want stories about the present time?"

"Of course. It's the present time now, isn't it? And now is the most important time."

"And about people you know something of?"

"Well, not about Zulus, like those stories I had the other day. *The White Hecatomb*, wasn't it?"

"What about Louis Becke?"

"There are always some white people in his tales?"

"And what about *Many Cargoes*? Jacobs writes about bargees, and you don't know any bargees."

"Yes, I liked *Many Cargoes*. But, then, you—you—I don't know, I think I should like to know those bargees."

"And what about *A Child of the Jago*? I should have thought that the people in that were a long way further away from you than the people of the Middle Ages. And you've read that twice."

"Oh, but it gives one such an insight into—"

"I thought you didn't read novels to get an insight into anything."

"Oh, bother! How should I know why I like a novel?"

She picked up the three offending books, and tied a piece of string round them.

"You are going out," she said. "Do leave these at the library and get me some more. I don't mind what they are, so long as they are about nice people—who are alive."

I took the books.

"But—mind," she said, "nothing about Cavaliers—or foreigners."

"I will do my best," I said.

"Or Jews," she added, as I reached the door.

## THE WEEK.

THREE bulky volumes of travel give character to the past week's output of books. A timely and important work is Lieutenant Seymour Vandeleur's *Campaigning on the Upper Nile and Niger*. This is a book which all who are desirous to understand the Niger question, now becoming so acute between France and England, will do well to turn. The circumstances under which the French occupied Bussa and Borgu are fully described. Sir George T. Goldie supplies an Introduction to the volume; and from it we quote this inspiring and instructive passage:

"All geographers and many publicists are familiar with the fact that the region in question possesses populous towns and a fertile soil, and, most important of all, races whose industry is untiring, notwithstanding the dis-

couraging and paralysing effects of insecurity of life, liberty, and property. They know that these races are possessed of high intelligence and considerable artistic skill, as displayed in their fine brass and leather work. They know that the early marriages in those latitudes, and the fecundity and vitality of the negro races, have, through countless generations, largely counteracted the appalling destruction of life resulting from slave-raiding, and that under reasonable conditions of security the existing population might soon be trebled and yet live in far greater material comfort than at present. They know, in short, that all that is needed to convert the Niger Sudan into an African India is the strong hand of a European protector."

But the interest of Lieutenant Vandeleur's pages is not wholly political or military. Opening the book at random we come upon this picture of a valley which was

"literally covered with game of all sorts; thousands of zebra were placidly feeding with innumerable herds of antelope of different species—wildebeest, hartebeest, a few mpala, and many gazelles, while away in the distance there were a few stately giraffe. Secure in their numbers, they seemed to scorn the presence of three lions which were eagerly watching them from one flank, while in the middle of the moving mass stood two great unwieldy rhinoceros, which contrasted strangely with the diminutive gazelles."

The book is well illustrated, and contains some good examples of military sketching.

If Lieutenant Vandeleur's book allies itself to the Niger trouble, Mr. Lionel Deale's *Three Years in Savage Africa* throws light on problems connected with our South African possessions and interests. The dedication of the book to Mr. Cecil Rhodes is significant. Mr. Deale is of French extraction, and, according to the account which Mr. H. M. Stanley gives of him in the Introduction he has written to the volume, he has been a great traveller from boyhood. In 1890 he was entrusted with a scientific mission by the French Government. On his return to France "he was reproached with having been too partial towards the British Administrations in the various countries he had travelled, and especially with having been too biassed against the French *padres* in Uganda, and having charged them with political intrigue." Later, Mr. Deale accompanied his friend Mr. Cust, of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, on a nine months' tour in South Africa. The great journey northward to the Zambesi, and thence to Lake Tanganika, which this book records, was begun in 1891, and was carried out with the usual quantum of adventures and disagreeables. Mr. Stanley answers for the readableness of the book: "No page is dull . . . his touch is light, his language clear and idiomatic, his tastes are simple, and the result is one of the brightest books of travel we ever read."

THE South Sea Islands are the subject of a book of travel, entitled *Brown Men and Women*, by Mr. Edward Reeves, a New Zealand writer, who knows the islands well. Mr. Reeves is very bitter against political missionaries, and against all who interfere with the freedom and native traits of the

islanders. Indeed, one of his aims is to show

"how superior in happiness the healthy, singing, laughing, well-fed, fat, sober, land-owning, young or old South Sea Island savage, erect and tall, without a care or a curse, is to the white slave of Stepney, to the drunken barbarian of Glasgow Wynds, to the landless, joyless, Wiltshire hind, marching stolidly, with bowed back and bent head, day after day nigher the workhouse, and, more than all, to the starving, diseased, little savage children of Deptford, growing up in Old England, a danger and a curse to the next generation."

Mr. Reeves has illustrated his book with a number of fine photographs of South Sea Islanders, men and women, especially the beautiful women of Samoa and Tahiti and Haapi. Some of these girls might be the heroines of Mr. Louis Becke's stories of "Reef and Palm."

Mr. Gregory's *Letter-Box, 1813-30*, is a curiously entitled book. The "Mr. Gregory" is the Right Honourable William Gregory, whose autobiography was edited by Lady Gregory four years ago. Lady Gregory now supplements that work by these selections from her husband's grandfather's political correspondence. Mr. Gregory was Under-Secretary for Ireland from 1813 to 1831. Lady Gregory writes:

"I see no need to apologise for their publication, purchase and perusal being non-compulsory, but I may quote a sentence of Lord Rosebery's: 'The Irish question has never passed into history, for it has never passed out of politics.' And also a word said to me by Mr. Lecky, that far less is known of the early part of this century in Ireland than of the close of the last."

There will be found in this volume letters to and from Lord Wellesley, Mr. Peel, Mr. Croker, Lord Talbot, and others. There can be no question that the book is important to students of Irish history.

MR. ERNEST RHYS has put forth a volume of *Welsh Ballads* inspired by, or directly paraphrased from, old Welsh models. In his notes at the end of the volume Mr. Rhys gives the following account of his aims:

"In the foregoing poems, whether original or not, it will be found that what may be called the traditional method has generally been followed in transferring Welsh words or Welsh characteristics into English verse. The idiosyncrasy of Welsh verse can at best, however, be very imperfectly maintained in an English medium; and the present writer has cared more to keep to the spirit than the exact letter of the old poets in *The Black Book of Carmarthen* and *The Red Book of Hergest*. Their poems are given here, accordingly, rather as paraphrases than translations; with everything freely eliminated that seemed likely to cause friction, or make their chances of being immediately enjoyed, as poetry must be if it is to have its free and full effect."

THE second volume is issued in Messrs. George Bell & Son's edition of the works of George Berkeley. It will be remembered that the Introduction to the first volume was written by the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour. The bulk of the present volume is taken up by Berkeley's *Alciphron*, a work to which the general reader to-day is a stranger.



Nevertheless the editor, Mr. George Sampson, writes:

"*Alciphron* was, and is likely to be, the most generally enjoyed of Berkeley's volumes. It is simply and variously entertaining, with merits that far outbalance its defects . . . Were its philosophical value . . . less it would still be eagerly read, for, in an age of delicate and symmetrical prose, it stands distinguished by its delicacy and symmetry."

*Alciphron* consists of seven dialogues, in which the Free-thinker is considered as atheist, libertine, enthusiast, scorner, cynic, metaphysician, fatalist and sceptic.

MR. VERNON BLACKBURN has put forth a comely volume of musical appreciations under the title of *The Fringe of an Art*. A photogravure portrait of Gounod faces the title-page.

## THE BOOK MARKET.

### THE HUMOURS OF BOOKSELLING.

MR. JOHN SHAYLOR, of Messrs. Simpkin, Marshall & Co., is perhaps the ripest bibliopole in London, and his store of bookselling anecdotes must be well-nigh inexhaustible. He has just given a budget of these to the *Publishers' Circular*, from which we take leave to reprint a portion of Mr. Shaylor's highly entertaining article. Mr. Shaylor writes:

"The following specimens of humour are without classification, and readers must decide for themselves to which class they belong, collected as they have been at random from many hundreds of a similar character. A scholar and a gentleman entering a bookseller's shop inquired for a translation of *Omar Khayyam*: 'No,' said the bookseller promptly, 'there is no such book. Homer wrote the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—both of which I have in stock, but he did not write the book you are inquiring for.' The bookseller evidently had not heard of the now popular Persian poet. Another recently had an important inquiry for a book the only clue to which that could be given was that it had a Hermit Crab on the cover. The intelligent bookseller had no difficulty in recognising that Drummond's *Natural Law* was the book required; on the other hand, little intelligence was shown by the bookseller who instructed his collector to try the *Journal of Horticulture* office for a copy of *Wilberforce on the Incarnation*, he evidently thinking that the Incarnation was a variety of the carnation. An inquiry was once made of an assistant for a certain book bound in russia, when answer was given that he did not think it could be done in Russia, but he thought he could get it done in Rome. During the brilliant summer of 1893, it will be remembered that wasps were very plentiful. A bookseller having to obtain on three separate occasions a copy of Aristophanes' *Wasps*, ventured the opinion that he believed the copies were required for some experts who were inquiring into the cause of the plague. . . .

"A mind conversant with the titles of

books is all that is necessary to translate what works were required when the following were asked for: 'Earnest Small Travellers,' and 'Alice the Mysterious,' by Bulwer, explained themselves. Homer's 'The Ills he had,' and Cæsar's 'Salvation Wars,' were only Homer's *Iliad* and Cæsar's *Helvetic Wars* slightly altered. 'Curiosities of a Woman-Hater' was only *Curiosities of Nomenclature*. 'Little Monster,' by J. M. Barrie, the author of 'Widow's Thumbs,' sounds peculiar. It appears rather disloyal to ask for 'The Queen's Beer,' but it was *Her Majesty's Beer* that was wanted. Hall's 'Bear Track Hunting' for Hall's *Bric-a-Brac Hunter*; 'All the Nights' (Hall & Knight's) *Algebra* and 'Sun and Shines' (Sonnenschein's) *Arithmetic* show gross ignorance of educational literature.

Although, according to Dr. Johnson, 'Wit will never make a man rich,' yet human nature would be poor indeed without it. Probably this explains the strange habit of associating a certain class of imaginary literature with certain days. Thus regularly on April 1 inquiries would be made by some small boy, or a bigger one denuded of wit, for 'The History of the World before the Creation'; another would inquire for 'A Treatise on the Extraction of Milk from the Pigeon,' by a 'Practical Fancier'; or, again, 'The Extraordinary Adventures of Adam's Grandfather,' written by himself; failing that, get 'A Pattern of Eve's Fig Leaves,' by an 'Experienced Dressmaker.'

Ignorance on the part of readers is accountable for the frequent inquiries made for books supposed to have been written by certain characters in fiction, such as 'The Idols of the Market Place,' by Squire Wendover, mentioned in *Robert Elsmere*. 'Sweet Bells Jangled,' quoted by Anstey in *The Giant's Robe*. 'The Pilgrim's Scrip,' by Richard Feverel, from G. Meredith's *Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, and many times have the 'Electric Creed,' by Marie Corelli, mentioned in *The Romance of Two Worlds*, been asked for. . . .

A lady recently asked a London bookseller if he had in stock the sequel to *A Fallen Angel*, by one of them. She believed there was such a book, but did not know the exact title; had he, she suggested, *The Eloping Angels* that she could see, as perhaps that might be the book she was looking for. 'No,' replied the bookseller, he had not; and unwittingly, and without sufficient reflection, he ventured the remark that he had in stock the *Heavenly Twins*, perhaps that would be the sequel. The recoil can be better imagined than expressed."

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### MR. BARNES, OF ZUMMERZET (?).

SIR,—I fear that my *causeries* have not the symmetry of the ornithorhynchus, or whatever fascinating beast it was that the late Sir Richard Owen reconstructed from a single bone. Mr. Andrew Lang, in reconstructing my arguments from a single short quotation in your admirable paper, has

made me say or imply things which I never even dreamed of—as he will admit, as soon as he has done me the honour to peruse the full text of my paper in the *Pall Mall Magazine*. He will then acknowledge that I did not attempt "destructive criticism" of his "native language and literature"; that I did not rate the dialect-writers of Scotland on a level with those of Somerset; or indulge in a general orgie of folly. It will give me the greatest pleasure to discuss with Mr. Lang any of the questions raised in my *causerie* or his letter; but if we begin by criticising what we don't happen to have read we shall only be darkening counsel.

"Phonetically," says Mr. Lang, "Zummerzetese may be interesting, but I confess to being much more interested in dialects that preserve words and phrases which modern English has lost. The dialect of Scotland does preserve such words and phrases in large numbers. If Zummerzetese does so, *do manus*, it is more interesting than I gathered from a study, by no means prolonged or elaborate, of the works of Mr. Barnes."

On this let me say: (1) William Barnes (as Mr. Lang may discover with no effort beyond that of reading my article) was not a Somersetshire, but a Dorsetshire, man, and used the Dorsetshire dialect. The correction is, no doubt, trivial; but we may as well be accurate.

(2) The dialects of the South-West of England (of Somerset, Dorset, Devon, and Cornwall), though quite distinct, do preserve large numbers of words and phrases which modern English has lost—old English words, French words, Celtic words. They are rich in varying degrees: but each is rich in such words. For proof of this I refer Mr. Lang to the publications of the English Dialect Society.

(3) But surely dialect in poetry appeals by something more than this merely philological interest. We do not, I apprehend, define or summarise the value of dialect in a song of Burns by saying that it preserves words which modern English has lost. To certain kinds of verse dialect adds a peculiar charm—and a charm which is essentially poetical rather than philological.

(4) If Mr. Lang deny this, I retire. If he grant it, I proceed, and urge that, though Barnes be a vastly inferior poet to Burns, there is no reason why he should be denied the chance which has never been denied to Burns; no reason why he should be forbidden to write "elem" for "elm," while Burns is allowed to write "aik" for "oak." I submit that if native speech, inflection, accent, add charm, in Mr. Lang's opinion, to Northern song, they may possibly add charm to Southern song. Mr. Lang, as a Northerner, may not be able to perceive it there: but I do not see why he should exalt that simple accident into a principle of criticism.—I am, &c.,

A. T. QUILLER-COUCH.

SIR,—It seems to me that Mr. Lang, with characteristic but amiable indiscretion, has entered the lists against Mr. Quiller-Couch singularly ill-equipped. If Mr. Lang can see nothing in the poetry of William Barnes but "oddly spelled English," he is either painfully ill-acquainted with his subject, or

shows a lack of appreciation for simple, direct, and often acutely realised lyric verse, which one is surprised to find in so sedulous a nurse of younger reputations. Indeed, on the face of it, he is sadly in the dark. To begin with, Barnes did not write in the Somerset, but in the Dorset, dialect; I assure Mr. Lang that there are marked differences to the trained ear; and why, in the name of all wild parallels, compare the whole of Scots verse-writers with those produced by a single English county? If a comparison is to be made at all, let it be between all England and all Scotland, or, if Mr. Lang prefer it, say between Dorset and Ross.

On Mr. Lang's theory that the dialect of Barnes is only "oddly spelled English," it may be an interesting exercise for him, and all of his belief, to give the ordinary equivalents for such words as these: *Anwest, backbron', amper, blooth, branten, tutty, marrels, colepezy, hidybuck, gally, dunt, drashel*; and if, after this, Mr. Lang is prepared to reconsider Barnes as a poet, let him turn to such verses as "Ellen Brine of Allenburn," "Fatherhood," "In the Spring," "The Love Child," and, as it has always appeared to me, that wonderful piece of faithful realisation, "Evenen in the Village."—I am, &c., C. K. BURROW.

Highgate: March 7.

#### WHY NOT SCHOOLS IN LITERATURE?

SIR,—Tell me why an author, no less than a painter, should not belong to a school? Watts, for instance, paints clearly under the influence of Titian. Sir John Millais has himself called his contribution to the Diploma Gallery of the Royal Academy "A Souvenir of Velasquez."

Most of us have seen the well-known remark of Guizot's, that "a great artist is perpetuated not merely by his own works, but he collects almost always around him men who are capable of receiving his inspiration, of being penetrated by his spirit. While these disciples do not possess that original genius, which lessons may merely develop and direct, they are in no sense copyists, nor do they join in any servile imitation of the models offered them. They form, in fact, what is known as a school, and add but a greater glory to the manner, the name, and the remembrance of its distinguished founder."

The same rule applies unquestionably in literature. Let us take the two most distinguished writers of English prose fiction—George Meredith and Thomas Hardy. In the first case, we may discern the influence of Victor Hugo, Dickens, Carlyle, Disraeli, Byron, and Ruskin, not to mention many others. In the case of Thomas Hardy, one finds other spirits at work. His English style is purer than Mr. Meredith's, and, while it owes much of its weight to that philosophic school of which, perhaps, George Eliot was the most popular exponent, he writes, at his best, rather as a poet than a Spencerian psychologist. Certain things in Mr. Hardy remind us of Balzac; lines here and there have the ring of Swinburne; yet, on the whole, he owes, perhaps, less to his predecessors and con-

temporaries in literature than any other author at present in England.

And what effect have these two men of genius produced on the younger authors of their generation? George Meredith has, undoubtedly, the greater number of so-called imitators. Men who do not read him at all are accused of copying him. This may be due to the fact that both Meredith and his supposed copyists have an admiration for Victor Hugo. Mr. Hardy, on the other hand, being an observer of life rather than a student of books, has a smaller following, and, indeed, unless a writer ventures to introduce a rustic into his story, he need never fear any accusation of catching the "Hardy trick."

We all remember Andersen's sad, but too cynical, story of the toy nightingale. The whistle's note was considered far more natural, pleasing, and "inevitable" than the bird's song. The tale is a good one, but not quite fair to the critical faculty. As a matter of fact, real singers do not, and have not in the past, suffered long under neglect and misprision. And when a genuine voice has been for a little while overlooked, the reason is to be found, not in the out-screaming of a successful impostor, but in the sweeter singing of some better nightingale. And then, after all, some of us prefer canaries. The cuckoo fascinates many. Great poets have loved the lark. Some ladies adore a parrot. Why not be amiable and leave our neighbours to choose their own birds? I, for my part, had a friend who worshipped a few geese. As geese, they were charming. My friend, I remember, found owls, in comparison, a bore and doves immoral. Are we not equally capricious about our authors? Your dearest genius gets on my nerves. The boon companion of my sleepless soul seems, to your mind, a very tedious, a most pedantic and affected and unreadable second-rate wretch. Your wife dotes on the pages of Mrs. So-and-So—a woman you hate. Your son drenches his youth in poetry which makes you sick. My sister can sit spell-bound on a summer's day over volumes which I could not read if they were the last left on this earth. My cousin's library—his Paradise—would be to me the tomb of every belief in literary art. Yet your wife, your son, my sister, and my cousin are intelligent creatures. They have a right to their caprices, and could justify them with chapter and verse from the judgments of established reviewers. What, for instance, could one say to a young gentleman who, on being reproached for his admiration of an absurd work, quotes the laurelled and enormous Mr. X. in support of his vulgarity?

Now, what, you will ask, has all this pretty jumble about pictures and parrots, and Victor Hugo, and mistaken relatives, to do with a literary school? I believe I mean that this is a large world, and that there is ample room for masters, disciples, and readers. Let us by all means take our nightingale, our owl, or our goose, but let us know him to be such. My poor friend, whom I can never quote too often, loved her geese, not because she thought them stars, but because they were ordinarily considered

the proverb for stupidity. All I ask is clearness; the present impulse seems rather toward confusion. I see all the newspapers, and, so far as I can judge, no two critics agree in their estimate of a book. One may like it because it is romantic, the other condemns it because he has never heard people talk "like that." Another volume is found by a family journal a message to the age, while one is warned by an equally respectable weekly to lift it with the tongs and place it where the flames are quickest. In the more serious branches of literature one historian is lauded because he is so dull that no one will trouble to refute his assertions; another is denounced because he is so brilliant that he must be mistaken. One is quite certain that English history was never meant to be in the least entertaining. "But I stay too long with you, I weary you." (Now and again I venture to quote Shakespeare, for he is still read a little, even by those who write at great length about him).—I am, &c., A BEGINNER.

#### THE BOOKLESS EAST-END.

SIR,—Our attention has been called to some remarks in your issue of February 26, under the heading of "The Bookless East-End," which are obviously intended for our establishment, and, as some of the remarks made are in our mind more likely to injure than to help our business, we feel bound to address a few words to you on the matter. It is patent that the writer of the article has little or no knowledge of second-hand book-sellers, or he would have known our firm, which, having been in existence since 1820, has a reputation almost as well known in the United States of America as it has in this country. As your correspondent, in your issue of March 5, truly points out, we have by far and away the largest collection of second-hand books in London. But above and beyond the different classes of books enumerated by your correspondent, we have the largest stock of miscellaneous literature, not only in London, but in England; and, as we number amongst our clients all sorts and conditions of men, from the nobility down to the humble mechanic, we believe we may claim that there is one good book-seller's shop between Aldgate and Stratford, notwithstanding the opinion of the writer of your article to the contrary. Trusting you will insert this,—We remain, yours truly, E. GEORGE & SON.

[Messrs. George & Son do not seem to have perceived that our contributor's search in the East-End was avowedly for *new-book* shops. The mention of Messrs. George & Son's *secondhand-book* shop—the importance of which was well known to our contributor—was purely incidental, and was certainly not intended to be uncomplimentary.]

#### WAGNERIANA.

SIR,—A few years ago some of the letters which Richard Wagner addressed to August Roeckel were published, and form an invaluable contribution to our knowledge of the master and of the way in which he regarded his creations. Written to an intimate and life-long friend, they are full



of the spontaneous expression of his inner life, and throw a strong light on the relation to each other of the two sides of his nature—the artistic and the philosophical. It is in the seventh of these published letters that we find a most interesting account of the discrepancy that existed for years between Wagner the artist and Wagner the philosopher, as well as a very clear statement of what is in reality the intrinsic value of his work.

"The period," he says, "when I began to write from direct intuition dates from 'The Flying Dutchman'; this was followed by 'Tannhäuser' and 'Lohengrin'; and whatever poetic expression may be found in these it must be ascribed to the sublime tragedy of self-renunciation, of the denial of the Will—a denial as conscious and voluntary as in the end it is inevitable, a denial which alone gives deliverance. It is this feature which imparts to my poetry and to my music its consecration, without which all that they may have of pathos and of power to quicken and kindle emotion could not possibly belong to them."\*

He then goes on to say that while his intuitive perception as an artist always guided him with such unerring certainty to make self-sacrifice the supreme means whereby final deliverance is wrought out, his conclusions as a philosopher had led him to build up a world of optimistic Hellenism, in which the sinking of the individual will has, of course, no place.

This curious conflict between reason and instinct continued so long that he had sketched out a large part of the Nibelungen Dramas before he was able to harmonise his philosophical with his artistic nature. It was during the composition of the *Götterdämmerung* (which was the first part of the tetralogy finished) that the long period of "Sturm und Drang" came to an end. The original form of the closing scene of this drama may be mentioned as the one instance where the philosophy of the author overpowered his intuition, to which in his previous works he had invariably remained true. In this case the result was so completely unsatisfactory that the crisis was perhaps hastened; and the offending passage was happily rewritten, after the inspiration of the artist had been fully accepted by the intellect of the thinker.

The works that followed deal (as we might expect) more consciously and directly with the deepest questions that concern mankind. If "Tristan and Isolde" delineates Love in its intense personal form as a "terrible torture" (so Wagner describes it in these letters), we may also learn therefrom how it is possible to pass through that fiery furnace:

"To lose the pain of consciousness,  
And quench at last the life-long thirst  
In deepest founts of cosmic life."

The last finished work, "Parsifal," portrays Love in its sublimated impersonal form, when it is the same thing as (and, indeed, would better be called) sympathy, or suffering with (Mitleid) all sentient creatures; and in this final stage of evolution it is

shown to be the strongest ethical power in the world. And both dramas demonstrate (1) the nothingness of external phenomena in their forms of Time and Space; (2) the fact that human suffering is directly proportional to the sharpness of the distinction which the "ego" draws between itself and the "non-ego"; and, furthermore, we learn that sooner or later, with more suffering or with less, the walls of partition crumble away, and the Self passes out into the boundless life of the universe.

A. BRODRICK BULLOCK.

Rome: Nov. 17, 1897.

### ROUND TOWERS.

SIR,—In your review of the reprint of that discredited volume of Henry O'Brien's on *The Round Towers of Ireland* you offer some suggestions as to the probable need for these towers, which exist in Scotland as well as Ireland.

You will pardon me for saying that a close examination of these towers would show that in every case your suggestions are somewhat out of date. The researches of Dr. Petrie and Mr. Joseph Anderson have shown very conclusively that, taking into consideration the form of these towers, their isolation and their internal arrangements, as well as by numerous references in the early annals, they were solely intended to afford an asylum for the ecclesiastics, and a place of security for the relics, such as books, bells, crosiers and shrines, under their guardianship. These things were regarded with extraordinary veneration by the Celtic tribes, and they took remarkable care in providing a place of safety for them.

The substantial character of the building attests that these towers were not built for any temporary purpose, but to resist the ravages of the Northmen—a constant source of terror.—Yours truly,

93, Devonport-road:

DAVID STOTT.

March 5.

### BOOK REVIEWS REVIEWED.

"Paris." M. ZOLA's *Paris* has received the instant and careful attention of English critics, both in

By Emile Zola. Mr. Vizetelly's translation and in the original. Yet most of the reviews of *Paris* are descriptive rather than critical. The complexity and populousness of the book have amazed, and perhaps somewhat paralysed, the critical mind. Apart from this, there is no doubt that, as the *Daily Chronicle* says, the interest of the book is psychological rather than literary; and that "it is impossible . . . for any book written by M. Zola to be received at this moment solely upon its literary merits and demerits. Inevitably, it is an incident in a dramatic history, and an item in the controversy between the sturdy novelist and the corruption he has attacked." *Paris*, says the *Athenæum*, "can hardly be praised from the standpoint of a work of art; it is far more a disguised pamphlet or sermon." The *Westminster Gazette* ranks *Paris* below *Lourdes* and *Rome*: "There was, in spite of obvious faults, a human interest

which redeemed those books, and made them something more than tracts for the times, or pictures of the nineteenth century in the lurid medium of M. Zola's imagination. But *Paris* is a laborious effort to cover the ground in a manner which cannot be artistic as a whole, and which in detail is, for the most part, highly disagreeable." On this phase of the book the critic we are quoting writes:

"In order that the book may be complete, every class in Paris must make its appearance, every phase of high life and low life (it is as a rule low life in both cases) must be described. Our old friend from Lourdes and Rome, the Abbé Pierre Froment, is once more the peg on which it all has to hang. The unfortunate man is kept trotting from pillar to post, appearing here, reappearing there, passing breathlessly from the financier's drawing-room to the slums of Montmartre, from the church to the chamber, from the salon of the old noblesse to the boudoir of the *demi-mondaine*—not because there is any cogent reason why he should visit such places, but because the colossal enterprise of his creator, M. Zola, requires that he should see everything and expose everything."

The *Daily Telegraph's* critic writes in the same vein:

"Descriptive details, personal details, political details, business details—details *ad nauseam*, exuberant, bewildering, and wearisome—furnish M. Zola with materials for the padding-out of his stories to unconscionable dimensions. *Paris* compels its readers to become intimately acquainted with scores of personages—mostly ignominious—who are to the leading characters of the romance exactly what walking 'supers' are to the 'principals' of an historical play. Nobody wants to read the elaborate biography and psychological analysis of a journalist or stockbroker, legislator or speculator, who just flits across the stage as an illustration of bad manners and worse morals, and then vanishes permanently from the scene without having awakened the least desire in any of the audience to learn what ultimately becomes of him. Such people crowd M. Zola's turgid pages, and are altogether unworthy of serious attention."

The *Times* and *Chronicle's* critics fasten upon M. Zola's social philosophy, his estimate of the present condition of Paris and his prescience—if it be prescience—of its future destiny. "The novel," says the *Times*, "is a scathing satire professedly founded on facts, many of which are undeniable."

Says the *Daily Chronicle*:

"With all his faith in France and all his zeal for her future glory, this volume is a more daring and a more concentrated indictment of modern society as it is seen in France than the most scathing of the earlier books. *La Terre* was a marvellous epic of rural brutality. *Germinal* was a hideous exposure of the industrial world, as *L'Argent* was of the swindling which parades as high finance. Other evils of Parisian life were pictured with equal power, and, although the methods were not always beautiful, the manifest sincerity of the whole is now acknowledged by all who understand. But in Paris we have a kind of concentration."

The *Times*, commenting on the tone of the book, says:

"The best excuse for his final lapse into despairing pessimism is the rottenness and corruption he sees all around him. *Pourriture* is, we presume, the word in the original French,

\**Briefe an August Roeckel von Richard Wagner*. Leipzig, 1894. V., p. 66 sqq.

and there is no exact synonym in our language. *Pourriture* is never partial; it pervades and taints everything like blood poisoning."

Yet both these critics give prominence to M. Zola's curious optimism. M. Zola, says the *Times*,

"is almost as rhapsodical as Hugo as to the glorious destinies of the centre of civilisation. Looking out from the heights of Montmartre, as he has often done, at the last he sees Paris no longer in the blackness of shadow, but illuminated in the bright radiance of a sinking sun. He sees the symbolical promise of a glorious harvest. Unfortunately, patriots must possess their souls in patience. It is but cold comfort to know that reason in the end must prevail over superstition, and that a religion grafted upon science will come to the birth by the sure but slow processes of evolution."

And the *Daily Telegraph* says that M. Zola's forecast of a new religion is the most hopeful and attractive feature of *Paris*. It quotes the following passage:

"Who can say," he writes, "that science will not some day quench the thirst for what lies before us? A religion grafted on science is the indicated, certain, inevitable finish of man's long march towards knowledge. He will come to it at last as to a natural haven, as to peace in the midst of certainty, after passing every form of ignorance and terror on his road. Is there not already some indication of such a religion? If precursors, scientists, and philosophers—Darwin, Fourier, and others—have sown the seed of to-morrow's religion by casting the good word to the passing breeze, how many centuries will be required to raise the crop? People always forget that before Catholicism grew up and reigned in the sunlight, it spent four centuries in germinating and sprouting from the soil. Grant some centuries to this religion of science, of whose sprouting there are signs upon all sides, and by and by the admirable ideas of some Fourier will be seen expanding and forming a new Gospel, with desire serving as the lever to raise the world, work accepted by one and all, honoured and regulated as the very mechanism of natural and social life, and the passions of man excited, contented, and utilised for human happiness!"

"This," says the critic, "may be a visionary's utterance, but it is certainly an eloquent and impressive one."

The *Athenæum* says that M. Zola's "apostrophes to Paris—the Paris of the future, which is still to be the centre of light for the universe," are "eloquent," and are the best parts of the novel.

## BOOKS RECEIVED.

Week ending Thursday, March 10.

### THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL.

THE SPRING OF THE DAY. By the Rev. Hugh Macmillan, D.D. Isbister & Co., Ltd. 5s.

THE HOLY BIBLE. Vol. VI. EZEKIEL TO MALACHI. Edited by J. W. Mackail. Macmillan & Co. 5s.

ERAS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH: THE AGE OF CHARLEMAGNE. By Charles L. Wells, Ph.D. T. & T. Clark. 6s.

THE BURDENS OF LIFE, AND OTHER SERMONS. By Alfred Rowland. Horace Marshall & Son. 3s. 6d.

### HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF THIRTY-NINE YEARS IN THE ARMY. By Sir Charles Alexander Gordon, K.C.B. Swan Sonnenschein & Co.

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REASON AND FAITH: A REVERIE. Macmillan & Co. 3s. 6d.

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CINQ MOIS AU PAYS DES SOMALIS. Par Prince Nicolas D. Ghika. Georg & Co. (Genève).

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A MODERN PILGRIM IN JERUSALEM. By John Rooker, M.A. S.P.C.K.

THREE YEARS IN SAVAGE AFRICA. By Lionel Deele. With an Introduction by H. M. Stanley, M.P. Methuen & Co. 21s.

CAMPAIGNING ON THE UPPER NILE AND NIGER. By Seymour Vandeleur, D.S.O. With an Introduction by Sir George T. Goldie. Methuen & Co. 10s. 6d.

NORTON-SUB-HAMDON. By Charles Task. Barnicott & Pearce (Taunton).

BELL'S CATHEDRAL SERIES: PETERBOROUGH, THE CATHEDRAL AND SEE. By the Rev. W. D. Sweeting, M.A. NORWICH, THE CATHEDRAL AND SEE. By C. H. B. Quennell. George Bell & Sons. 1s. 6d. each.

### SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY.

THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF MAN. By S. B. G. McKINNEY. Hutchinson & Co.

A STUDY OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES. By James Seth, M.A. Wm. Blackwood & Sons. 7s. 6d.

### EDUCATIONAL.

TOURIST'S VADE MECUM OF FRENCH COLLOQUIAL. Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons. 1s.

GREAT EDUCATORS SERIES: HORACE MANN AND THE COMMON SCHOOL REVIVAL IN THE UNITED STATES. By B. A. Hinsdale, Ph.D. Wm. Heinemann.

THE UNIVERSITY TUTORIAL SERIES: LIVY, BOOK IX. W. B. Clive. 3s. 6d.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

A ROLL OF THE GRADUATES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW: FROM 31ST DECEMBER, 1727, TO 31ST DECEMBER, 1897. Compiled by W. Innes Addison. James MacLehose & Sons.

THE GRENADA HANDBOOK, DIRECTORY, AND ALMANAC: 1898. Compiled by Edward Drayton. Sampson Low.

WITH BAT AND BALL. By George Giffen. Ward, Lock & Co.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SKATING. By Fred W. Foster. B. W. Warhurst. 5s.

THE CARE OF THE SICK AT HOME AND IN THE HOSPITAL: A HANDBOOK FOR FAMILIES AND NURSES. By Dr. Th. Billroth. Translated by J. Bentall Edean. Fifth edition. Sampson Low. 2s. 6d.

THE WORKS OF GEORGE BERKELEY, D.D., BISHOP OF CLOYNE. Edited by George Sampson. Vol. II. George Bell & Sons.

SENTIMENTAL EDUCATION: A YOUNG MAN'S HISTORY. Translated from the French of Gustave Flaubert, by D. F. Hannigan. 2 vols. H. S. Nichols, Ltd.

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, GALWAY: CALENDAR FOR 1897-8. Dublin University Press.

THE SUFFOLK SPORTING SERIES: CYCLING. By H. Graves, G. Lacy Hillier, and Susan, Countess of Malmesbury. Lawrence & Bullen. 6d.

A MANUAL OF AGRICULTURAL BOTANY. From the German by Dr. A. B. Frank. Translated by John W. Paterson. Wm. Blackwood & Sons. 3s. 6d.

### NOTES ON NEW EDITIONS, ETC.

MR. JAMES SETH'S *Study of Ethical Principles* (Wm. Blackwood & Sons) has come to us in its third edition, which contains new chapters on "The Method of Ethics" and "Moral Progress."

MR. D. F. HANNIGAN has translated Flaubert's *L'Education Sentimentale*, which he not unjustly describes as "an encyclopædic novel," and "a vast treasure-house of pitiless observation." Mr. Hannigan claims that his translation follows the text minutely, and that the author's characteristics are preserved. Mr. H. S. Nichols publishes.

In the "Great Educators" (Wm. Heinemann) series we have a new volume devoted to *Horace Mann and The Common School Revival in the United States*. This has been prepared by Mr. B. A. Hinsdale, Ph.D., whose "single purpose" has been "to set before the reader Horace Mann as an educator in his historical position and relations."

FROM MESSRS. Macmillan & Co. comes a fifth edition of Mr. T. Rice Holmes's *History of the Indian Mutiny*. "Among the more important alterations and additions are those which relate to the Afghan War, the battle of Sacheta and the events which led up to it, the battle of Chinhat, the defence of the Lucknow Residency, Havelock's campaign, Lord Canning's Oudh proclamation, and the vexed question of Sir Colin Campbell's responsibility for the protraction of the war. On the whole, the text is enlarged by about twenty pages; and several new appendices have also been written."

*Cycling* (Laurence & Bullen) is reprinted from *The Encyclopædia of Sport*, with additions and alterations, and is the joint work of Mr. H. Graves, who deals with the general and mechanical branches of the subject; Mr. George Lacy Hillier, who treats of cycle racing; and Susan, Countess of Salisbury, who writes on cycling for women. Their articles make a slim book illustrated with diagrams.



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